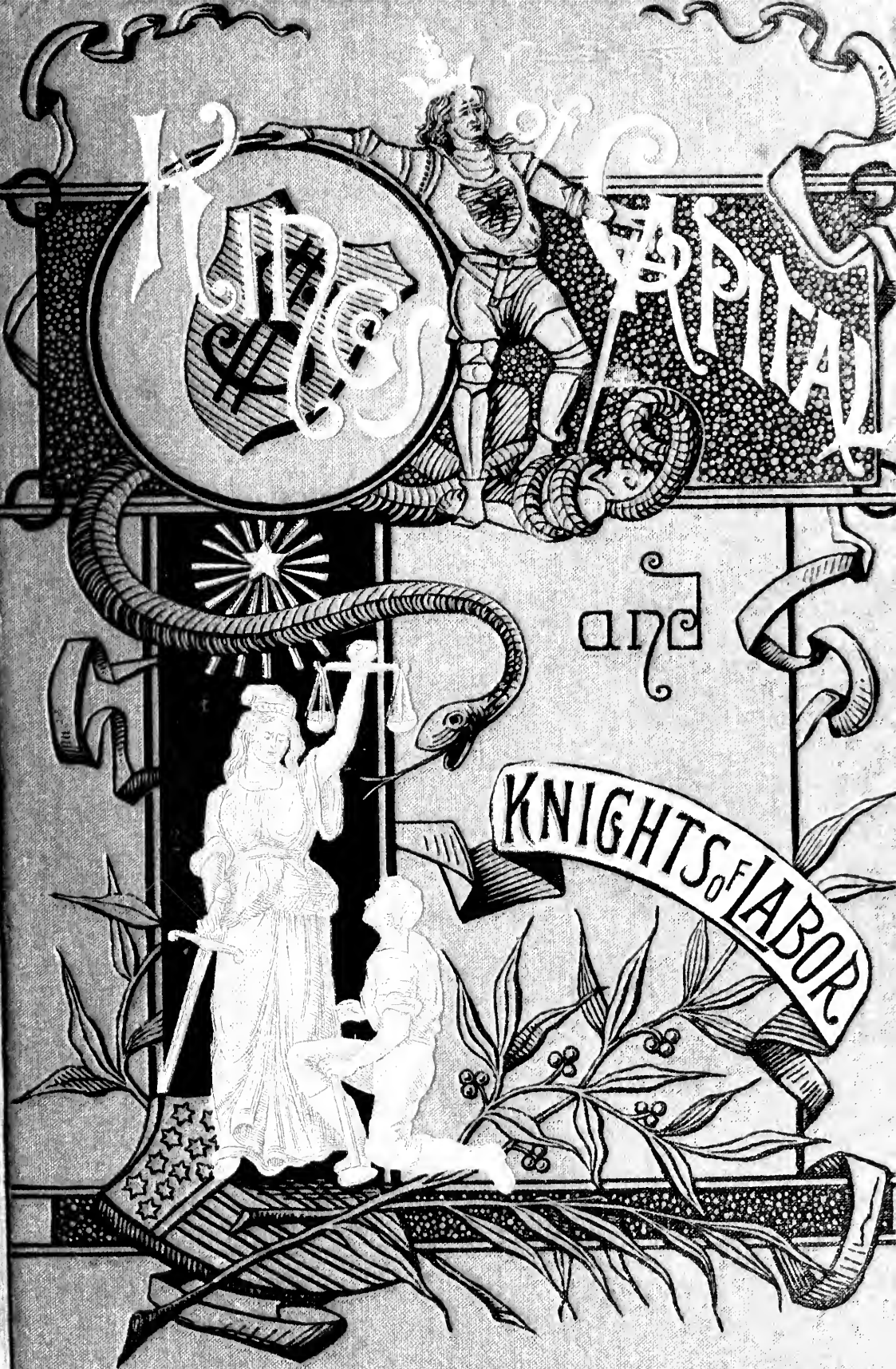


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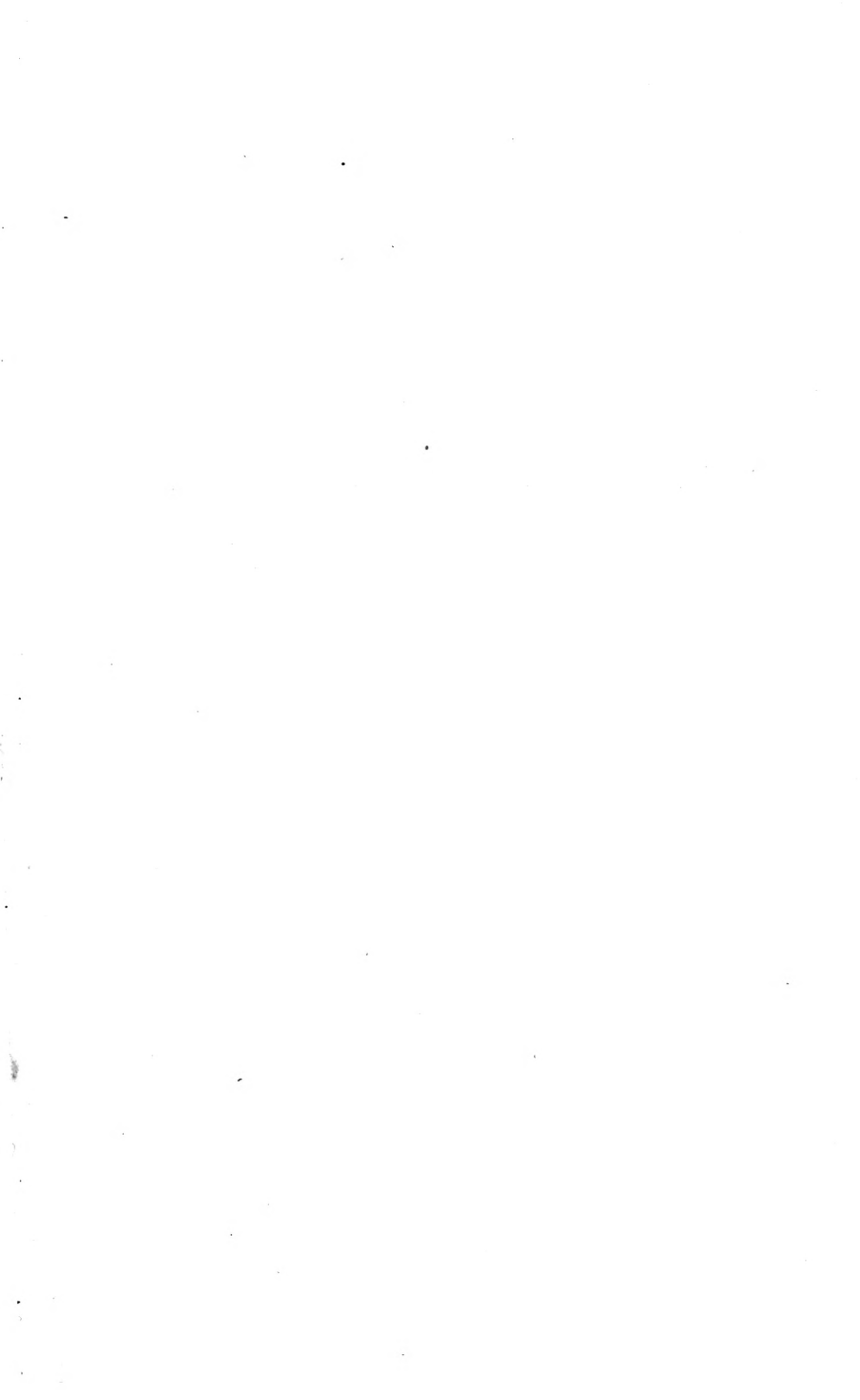
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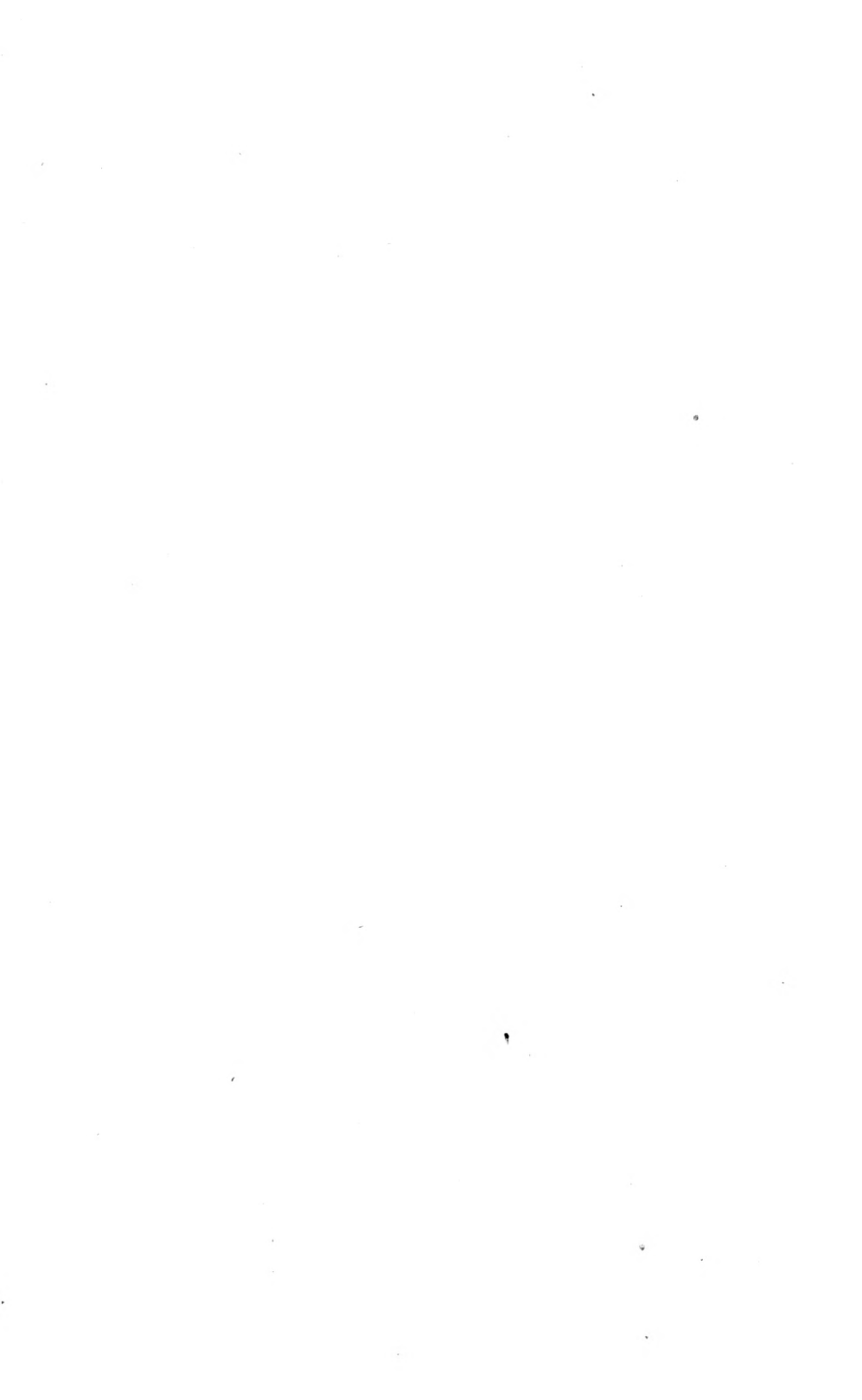
KNIGHTS OF LABOR





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KINGS OF CAPITAL AND Knights of Labor

BY
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AND
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POWERS & LE CRAW, PUBLISHERS,
5 and 7 EAST FOURTH STREET,
NEW YORK.

M. C. LEAVITT

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PREFACE.

Dangers from three sources imperil our American Institutions. We must find remedies or perish.

POLITICAL CORRUPTION in our legislatures and municipalities has reached enormous proportions. Nor have our executive and judicial departments been always free from stain. Our public domain is now nearly exhausted by reckless land-grants to greedy monopolists. Towns and cities groan under tax burdens imposed to enrich unscrupulous adventurers. We must learn to be politically honest, or sink into the vortex which swallows nations pampered in vice and luxury by illicit gains.

SOCIAL DANGERS are now also beginning to darken our sky. Lord Macaulay asserted that the true test of our institutions would be reached when our public lands became settled and population consequently crowded into our cities. On the period predicted by the brilliant Englishman we have just entered. Capital and Labor are in open war. If their difficulties are not adjusted, our country will be shaken as by earthquakes. And to

the perils of these struggles must be added evils from the enormous fortunes in the hands of the few to the injury of the many, and of the Republic itself.

BIBLE CHRISTIANITY will be the ultimate cure for political and social ills. Unfortunately, the streams from its divine fountains are made turbid by human greed and human pride. Often the Church sells itself to the world, and has itself to be purified. Let me illustrate !

One Sunday morning the writer preached to a New York congregation. After the service he noticed in the aisle a man with his hands in his pockets and a most patronizing air of ownership. He was not a communicant, but a notorious speculator in Wall Street, generous and popular, undisciplined and profane. On the very next Monday the writer was told by that man in his counting-room that he was an officer in the church, and had driven off the minister by enforcing a mortgage that secured moneys advanced to pay expenses. By similar methods he held in his grasp the oldest and most influential weekly paper in the Communion he so adorned.

We can only escape our political, social, and religious dangers by an appeal to the American People. As editor, clergyman, and college president in and near New York for almost twenty years, the writer has had extensive opportunities of observation. He lived in the midst of the Fisk and Tweed enormities, which have left their impress on these pages. Now he would gather the experiences of his life into efforts intended to expose and relieve the evils he has described.

FICTION must be employed as an agent in the emancipation of our American Society. Through it alone can we reach the people. Our Saviour Himself gives example of its use for the loftiest spiritual ends. Prophet and apostle, by symbol and allegory, convinced the reason, persuaded the will, and aroused the conscience. Who can estimate the blessing of those marvelous creations of Bunyan, the Baptist tinker, which have shed light on the path of so many pilgrims to the Celestial City ! Nor does the humor detract from the power and solemnity of the lesson. Defoe, in his story of *Robinson Crusoe*, has given fresh charm to childhood and a purer and brighter halo to home. Dickens and Thackeray have not only amused, but improved mankind. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was an agency of genius in rending the chains from millions of slaves, proving itself thus one of the regenerators of a nation. Smile and tear lie close together in man, and hence in those immortal works the comic and the tragic muse have been both employed for the most beneficent moral purposes.

In a distant way the author of these tales would follow in the path of illustrious writers who through *Fiction* have accomplished good. As already seen, he has had peculiar opportunities for the study of the evils he seeks to mitigate. Indeed, there is scarcely a striking incident or character in either of the novels that has not been suggested from his own observation. In satirizing the shocking perversions of church relations to unscrupulous worldly ends he would assist that Christianity which, through an inspired Bible, he believes will yet prove the regenerator of humanity.

THE PEOPLE ASK INFORMATION.—After the first sales of this book the author was told by his publishers that there was a demand by his readers for an essay on the relations of Capital to Labor. He was rejoiced to know that the American People wanted instruction as well as amusement. Such an expressed wish seemed to him one of the brightest proofs that our country was predestined to escape the dangers which have begun to cloud her future. May he not hope that his suggestions will be acceptable to both Capital and Labor? Between these it is his effort, not to increase antagonism, but to promote confidence and harmony. Thus only can we perpetuate our American Republic.

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"Crowning the old turrets with a dying glory."
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CHAPTER I.

ARLINGTON CASTLE.



ARLINGTON CASTLE stands on an eminence of Western England which commands a view of the opposite coast only in the clearest sunlight. It is a mediæval structure, originally stern and stately, but now softened into grace and beauty by the touch of modern art.

At the opening of our story, the sun, just sinking below the sea, was flashing and flushing from the gorgeous windows, and crowning the old turrets with a dying glory. The white surf, breaking over the rocks, was gleaming in the last beams of day, and the thunder of the sea was heard among the hills.

The Earl of Arlington was sitting on the northern piazza, and his venerable form and locks were also transfigured in the farewell splendors of the sun. In the circuit of that day its light had not shone into a more benevolent face or over a nobler person.

As he arose and applied his telescope to his eye, you saw in him the best traits of an ancestry which had seldom abused their aristocratic privileges. Indeed,

with all his lordliness, there was in the old noble that touching kindness which wins the poor man's heart.

As his granddaughter, Lucy Neville, came smiling round an angle of the tower, the Earl, still gazing through his telescope, addressed her: "Are you sure, Lucy, that Clare's telegram said that your father would arrive in the last evening train?"

"I am certain, grandpapa," she replied, and, giving him the message, added, "you can see for yourself."

Dropping his glass and glancing over the paper, the Earl exclaimed, "Yes, you have made no mistake." Then, raising his telescope and adjusting its tubes, he gazed intently into the distance, and soon said: "And there he comes. Just on the summit of the mountain! I see the smoke of the locomotive, and now you can faintly hear the scream of the whistle."

While the Earl spoke, a pair of splendid black horses whirled the carriage around the southern buttress of the castle, and dashed up to the great door, which was standing hospitably open. A lady came hurriedly out and entered the vehicle. Soon the rumbling of wheels and the tramping of horses were lost in the distance, and there was a race for the station between two fiery steeds and the rushing locomotive.

"Emily," said Lord Arlington, "will be too late to welcome Oscar as he steps from the train. She always splits her seconds so as to leave too little on her own side. But I know no one better fitted to compete with steam and lightning."

“Ma will not fail,” said Lucy, with a slight laugh and a quiet assurance in her tone. “Prince and Duke catch her spirit and will fly along the road. I am sure that they will be at the station, with a minute to spare.”

Just then the headlight of the locomotive was seen around a curve of the mountain, glancing and quivering through the evening gloom, and not long after, the carriage, flashing through the gate and over the white gravel of the green lawn, stood again at the door of the castle. Lucy darted forward, rushed over the piazza, and was speedily in the arms of her father, and showering him with her tears and kisses. Lord Arlington followed, and if not so demonstrative and enthusiastic, was as sincere and as truly ardent in his welcome.

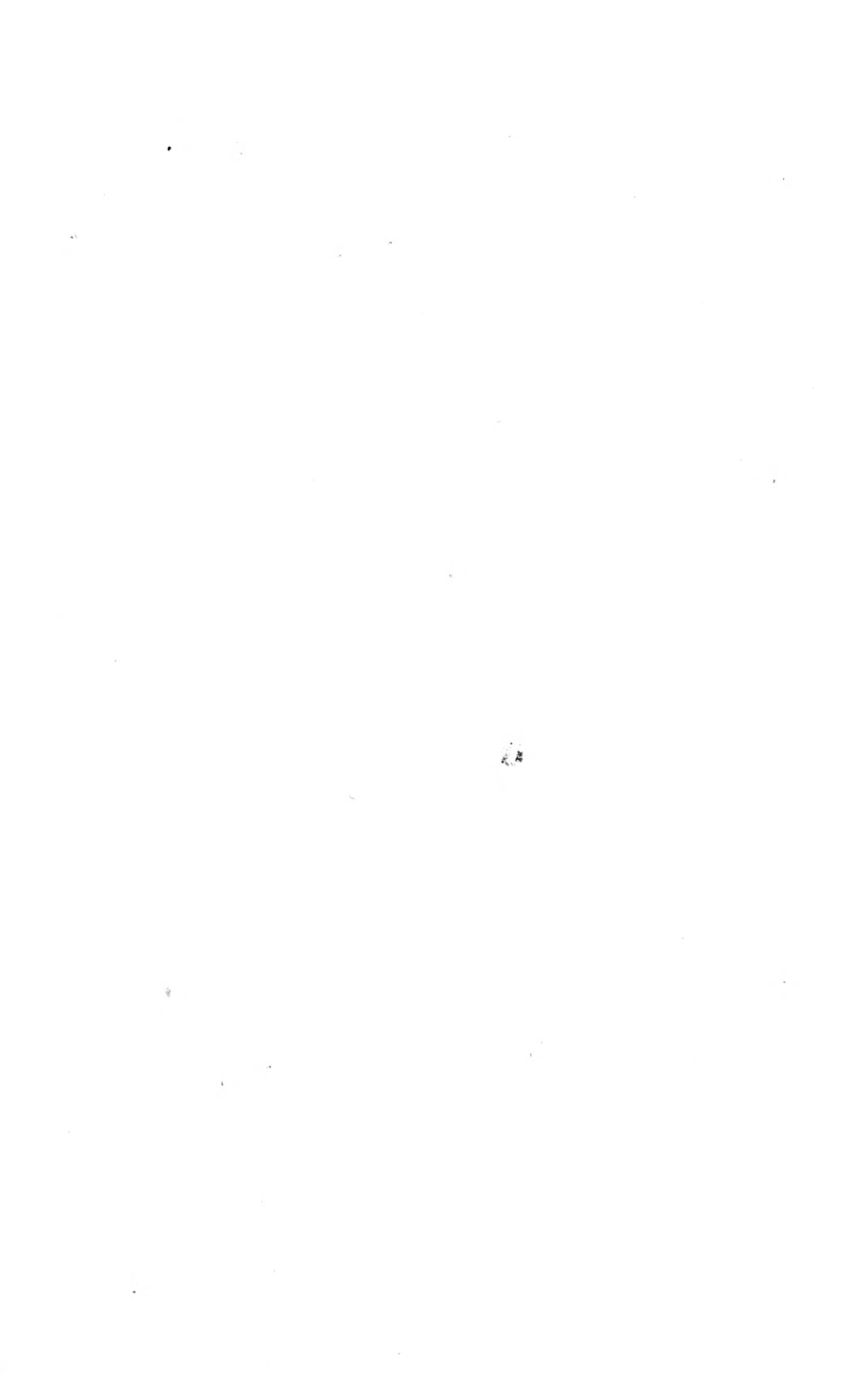
The violence of Mrs. Neville's feelings had subsided, and she was resting and luxuriating in the silent tranquillity of her joy.

While the party are continuing their caresses and making and answering inquiries, we will take occasion to acquaint the reader with the persons who have been the subject of this brief recital.

Captain Oscar Neville and his bride had gone to India many years before and seen there the rough trials of military life, and mingled in the most fearful perils and the most daring adventures of the Sepoy war. She was then the youngest and fairest of the daughters of the Earl of Arlington, and was now their sole survivor, all her sisters having been followed to the grave in her absence.

Lucy had been born in the sacred city of Benares, on the banks of the Ganges, under the gleam of crescents and the shadows of pagodas. She had passed with her parents through the horrors of Lucknow, and the raptures of the relief, and many other scenes of blood and famine. Captain Neville himself had fought with heroic valor in all the most memorable battles of the campaign and been made a colonel for his bravery, with a prospect of speedy promotion, and even knighthood, and the very highest honors of the military profession. Mrs. Neville and her daughter had returned to England to recover from the exhaustions of war and climate, and had taken the places of the departed in the home of Lord Arlington. Her brother Clare, now a member of the House of Commons, was the only heir between herself and the estate. Owing to the necessities of the military situation, the return of Colonel Neville had been delayed, first from month to month, and then from year to year, until, after a long and painful separation, Arlington Castle was at last made joyful by his presence. The surrounding neighborhood had heard of the arrival, and the lawn was swarming and darkening with a noisy and happy multitude, while the lights from trees and windows and turrets illuminated the hills and blazed far out over the ocean.

On the next morning, Lord Arlington and Colonel Neville stood on the lawn in eager conversation. They had evidently found some topic of mutual and exciting interest, and their eyes and faces glowed and kindled as they talked.







"Are you sure," inquired the Earl, "that Clare said that it would be necessary for you to visit America? This is most unexpected and extraordinary."

"It is nevertheless painfully true," answered Colonel Neville, and added, laughing a little bitterly. "A soldier's fate pursues me. I scarcely touch the shores of England from the East, when I am instantly ordered to the far West."

"But what did Clare say?" asked the Earl. "It seems almost incredible. Indeed, I do not think that any danger of mere pecuniary loss will justify your absence."

"He told me," answered Colonel Neville, "that Emily's one hundred thousand pounds in the INTER OCEANIC RAILWAY would probably be lost unless I could go in a week. As this is our only independent fund I must make a sacrifice to secure it. Clare can not leave on account of the Irish Church Bill, without losing his influence in Parliament, and as I am used to obeying orders, I propose to sail next week."

"So soon," exclaimed the Earl, with pain and surprise. "I will hardly permit it. The trial will be too great for Emily. I think she will scarcely consent after so long a separation."

"O," answered Neville, "that is already arranged; you may imagine how; Emily and Lucy will accompany me to the United States. We expect to telegraph this morning for state-rooms in the *Britannia*, a noble ship, which leaves Liverpool next Wednesday."

The Earl was startled and grieved by this announce-

ment. His blood flushed over his cheeks and up into his forehead, and his eyes flashed sparkles, like those they had known in his young manhood. He had anticipated with silent delight the arrival of his son-in-law, expecting him to shed light and joy over his home, and now before him was the prospect of sudden desertion and abandonment to entire loneliness. Subduing, however, his excitement, he folded his arms, stood a moment in deep meditation, and then gazed over the landscape. Colonel Neville was annoyed, and charged himself with abruptness and precipitation. After some minutes of thought and silence, the Earl recovered his composure and suddenly began :

“Neville, do you see that house crowning the little eminence just above the stream, flashing back to us the beams of the morning sun?”

“I do, most plainly,” replied the Colonel, “and a more picturesque spot is not in this whole valley.”

“That house,” continued the Earl, “is often in my mind, and in a way and for reasons you cannot even imagine. Do you know who lives in it?”

“Twenty years since,” said Colonel Neville, smiling at the strangeness of the Earl’s manner and inquiry, “I might have answered in the affirmative. Now, however, I must confess my ignorance.”

“I will tell you, Neville,” replied the Earl. “That is the home of the agent of the Arlington Estate. He collects the rents from my fields, my mines and my manufactories. Now, I fear that just such fellows are undermining old England and producing our panics

and depressions. You think our peril is from Russia, and I think our peril is from the United States."

Colonel Neville was more surprised than ever. He perceived in Lord Arlington's mind a species of double operation, and knew while he was talking on one subject he was thinking of another, and also that he was drifting toward some unexpected conclusion. With a puzzled look, at last he said:

"My lord, you speak in riddles. I cannot understand you."

"I will explain myself," returned the Earl. "Do you remember the American who, twenty years since, just after your marriage, visited Arlington Castle?"

"I had utterly forgotten him," said the Colonel, "but now his image rises before me, as I speak, with unusual distinctness."

"Well," answered the Earl, "that man, standing on this spot, made an impression on me I can never forget. He was certainly one of the most remarkable persons I have ever known during my long and varied life."

"Remarkable, as I remember," rejoined Neville, "for his assurance and the part his nose played in his conversation. I can now recall his insufferable impudence, and the disagreeable twang of his sharp Yankee tones."

"I do not wonder at your disgust," said the Earl, with a gush of laughter, "nor the vividness of your memory. He went about with his hands in his pockets, and asked more questions about the Arlington Estates than their owner would have ventured. Still, I fear the fellow was a prophet."

“Will you be pleased to throw some light on his profound vaticinations?” asked Neville, with a slight curl of his lip and nostril.

Without noticing the ironical expression of his son-in-law, the Earl resumed.

“I will comply with your request. Standing just here,” he said, pointing with his finger to the precise spot, “Ellis concluded a long conversation, with a dissertation, almost as I will now repeat his words: My lord, in that agent’s house dwells the true secret of your British future. He stands between capital and labor. The rents collected by such men support the expensive throne and aristocracy of England. Now, in America our farmers have no such burden. They own the land and pay no rents. Their improvements are their own. When our railway transportation and ocean navigation become sufficiently advanced they will undersell your grain, your mutton and your beef, and perhaps even your butter and your cheese, and drive you from your own markets. And mark it, my lord, when our manufacturers have learned from you lessons of intelligence, which are inevitable, and our lawmakers give us a sound currency, you will curse your boasted system of Free Trade and come over to America to buy your clothes, your cutlery and eventually your machinery and your steamships.—Neville, I fear that prophecy is now coming true, and I wish to study the question for myself in the United States. For if Ellis proves right, there will be both a social and political revolution which will seriously affect the value

of these Arlington Estates, and the future of you and your wife, and your children, and of all my posterity for generations."

Colonel Neville was astonished. He had never before reflected on these questions. Now, however, that the argument had been clearly presented, he seized its import at a glance. After musing for a moment he inquired :

"Is there no solution for this problem? It threatens our wealth and power at home, and therefore the ascendancy of our empire abroad. You will oblige me by giving your opinion."

The Earl paused, placed his cane under his chin, and kept it there a moment, and then, abruptly striking it on the ground, replied :

"In my opinion the Yankee was right. As our visitor expressed it, Cobden was a crank, and Bright is Cobden with another twist. The repeal of the Corn Laws was a political suicide. FREE TRADE is for the millennium, but until that happy period of universal benevolence, each nation must protect itself against its neighbor's greed, and old England never needed more protection than now."

"I am astonished at your conclusions," replied Neville, "and by no means ready to follow the Yankee. He is a bird of ill-omen, and I don't like his prophetic croak."

"But this is not the worst of it," said the Earl. "We have more serious troubles before us. To keep India, England must have Egypt. We must own our

highway to Calcutta, and to own it we must fight for it. Now, a commercial people wont fight, and we are becoming a commercial people."

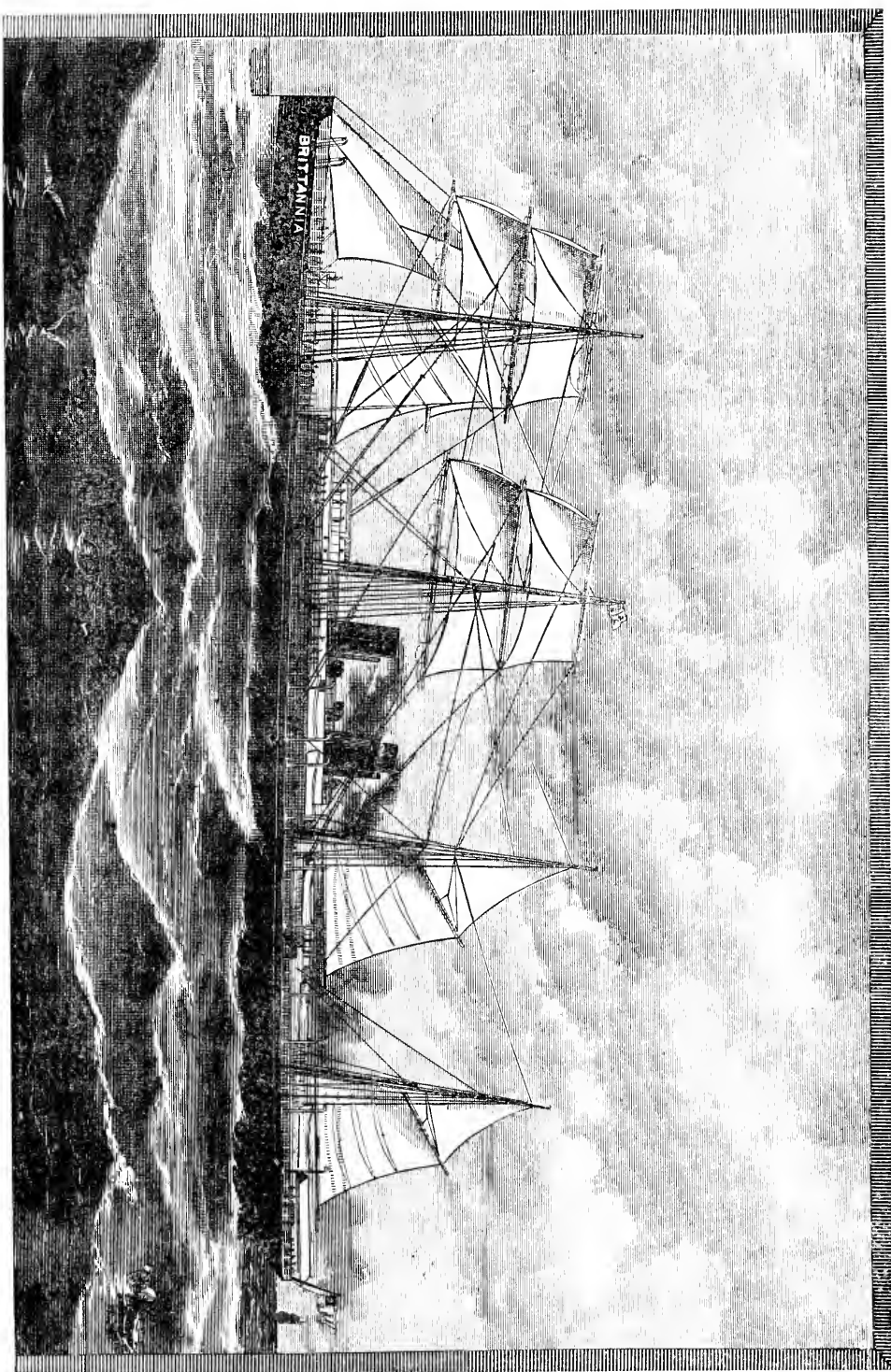
"There we can agree," said Neville. "that's in the line of my profession. An empire made by the sword must be kept by the sword, and only our old aristocracy can infuse into a British army the spirit which makes the sword effective."

"Yes," responded the Earl, "as our laboring and commercial people multiply, they will demand parliamentary representation, and all our foreign relations will be regulated by the balance sheet. The men of pounds, shillings and pence will only wage war for mercantile profit. Then the doom of the empire is certain. Jobbers never made heroes."

"I can see all this," said Neville. "Our Queen is a figure-head and the Lords are fast becoming puppets. The people will not be willing long to pay such vast annual sums to support the wooden figures in this costly royal puppet-show."

"We are on the eve of a social and political revolution," said the Earl, "and I want to study these questions in the United States, where they were solved a century ago."

"But if reports are true," said Neville, laughing. "our American cousins are no improvement on ourselves. Their legislatures are bought like sheep in the market. Each town and city is a prey to rascals. Nearly every man has his price. New York is a carcass covered by devouring vultures. Jackals and



"With steam and sail dashing over the Atlantic."

hyenas are eating the heart of the Republic. The American eagle has turned a buzzard. Monarchical England is bad enough, but deliver me from the kites and crows of a young people already old in corruption and crime. I saw by a New York daily that last year there were fifteen hundred murders committed in the country, and less than one hundred murderers hung."

"I have read all these things, too," replied the Earl, "in their own papers, and the same accounts with the British spice of our London journals. It looks badly, indeed, for a young country. But, although an old English aristocrat of a Norman descent before the battle of Hastings, I have yet a generous faith in the American Republic. The present is a passing phase of her life. Her young strength will cast off these putrid excrescences. I believe in her future, and want to study her for myself. Besides, you and I have a personal interest in the matter. Yankee ingenuity and enterprise in agriculture and manufactures are foes more to be dreaded than Russia or the Socialists. You see," he added, laughing, "I may be converted into a Republican, and transport my Arlington estates into America. At all events I am determined to visit the land of the Yankee."

"But," urged Neville, with alarm, "is not your resolution hasty and venturesome? At your advanced age, it seems to me, that you should not be exposed to the sufferings of ocean navigation, and the inconveniences of a young country, and the journey might

prove even at the peril of your life. Emily, I am sure, will protest against such a risk."

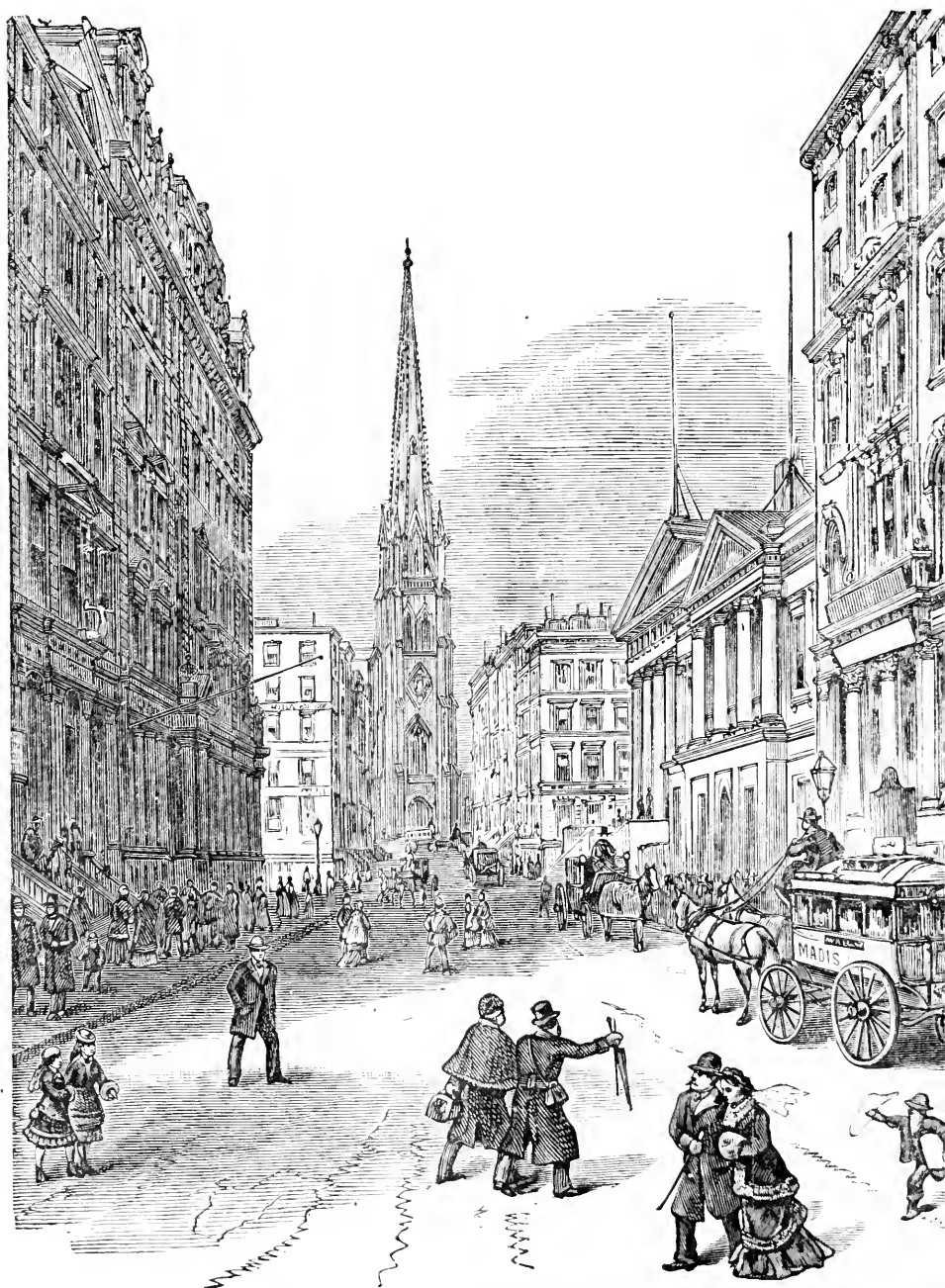
"And yet," answered the Earl, a little sadly, "she proposes to go herself and take with her both husband and daughter, and leave me in the old castle alone. You must permit me to decide which is the more pleasant alternative."

To this argument Colonel Neville could make no reasonable reply. Still, he was not satisfied, and continued enlarging the category of objections. Finally, to silence all further attempts, the Earl said decidedly, and in a tone admitting no more questioning:

"Neville, I am resolved. You cannot shake me. Besides the ocean agrees with me, and the railway carriages in the United States are, for long journeys, more comfortable than our own, and the hotels, I am told, along the chief routes are usually excellent. I have no fear of the result, and will sail with you on Wednesday."

The arrangements for the voyage were soon made. Lord Arlington, Colonel and Mrs. Neville, and Miss Lucy proceeded early in the following week to Liverpool and embarked for Boston. While the *Britannia*, with steam and sail, is dashing over the Atlantic. I will relate a series of events elsewhere, which did not terminate until she had reached her destined harbor.

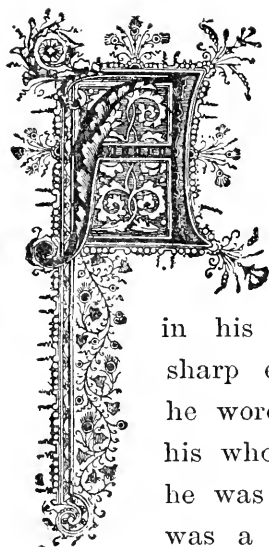




“Along a street of the American Metropolis.”
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CHAPTER II.

SAM SLYKES.



LONG a street of the American Metropolis, in the early evening gaslight, could be seen a peculiar individual.

He was sharp in his chin, sharp in his nose, sharp in his eyes, sharp in his forehead, sharp in his expression, sharp even in the little pointed silk hat he wore tilted on one side of his head. In his whole air and manner and movements he was unmistakably *sharp*. In his hand was a sharp stick, he had a slight, sharp moustache and a tuft of sharp reddish beard. He was small, agile, quick and *sharp* in soul and in body.

The star presiding over his birth must have had the sharpest of points, and the angel recording his destiny the sharpest of pens. You saw before you the impersonation of American *sharpness*. The cuffs, the bosom and shirt collar of this sharp person were covered with flaring red figures, his neck-tie flashed with crimson, an enormous diamond blazed on his breast, and from his fingers shone the light of a magnificent ruby. His clothing was in the height of the style, but sat on his small person with a gigantic vulgarity.

The man paused before a chapel, whose style of architecture was questionable as that of his own dress. What affinity between him and such a place remains to be seen. He stood before the door. He gazed. He chuckled. He punched his own ribs, twirled his slender moustache, fondled his little pointed beard. He flourished his cane and laughed outright as if overcome with his pleasant recollections. He moved forward and looked backward, and the grin and leer of his pleasure remained on his face, until, turning a corner, he came before another smaller and more unpretentious ecclesiastical edifice, which changed his whole expression. He frowned. He shook his stick in anger. He scolded under his breath, and—shall I say it—he muttered low curses before the sacred place. He was evidently in a tempest of disdain, disgust and displeasure.

Now, my reader, can you give me the clew to this strange conduct? What a mysterious interest in silence! How impressive a human being, when his lips utter no intelligible words, and you judge him only by the dumb show of his actions! Let him speak articulately! The spell is broken, and he is reduced to the level of our ordinary humanity. When you have penetrated the secret of his soul, the interest dissolves. I almost hesitate to lift the veil, lest I may dispel the curiosity I have excited towards this singular personage.

He passed rapidly into the blaze of the most crowded avenue of the city. After a few blocks, made a detour

to the left, and reached finally an immense edifice on which, gleaming in the gaslight, above dim statues of stone, shone in great gilded letters—INTER OCEANIC RAILWAY.

This mysterious being in human shape stopped before a private door, took from his pocket a night key, applied it to the lock, and entering, ascended two flights of stairs to a front room brilliantly lighted, and expensively, but gaudily and flaringly furnished.

Lounging on a sofa, with his heels on a table and above his head, was a man puffing smoke from his lips, until he resembled a young volcano. The clouds rose in graceful and widening circles, floated about through the room, and then slowly dissolved into the ever-thickening air. Our new acquaintance is a man of mark. His enormous disproportioned head, hung around with dark, short, grizzled curls; his projecting, massive brow; his firm lips and thin pale face and full black contrasting beard, with the sparkle of his large clear gray eyes, notwithstanding a slender, stooping and somewhat ungainly form, impress the beholder with a sense of overmastering intellectual power. The voice is an instant and sensitive index of culture, and in the notes soon to be heard were the unmistakable proofs of early educational discipline.

As the first personage we described entered the apartment, the second personage, whom we have just discovered, changed his feet rapidly from the table to the floor, and burst out into a loud laugh, lasting for some moments. When his hilarity had somewhat subsided, he exclaimed :

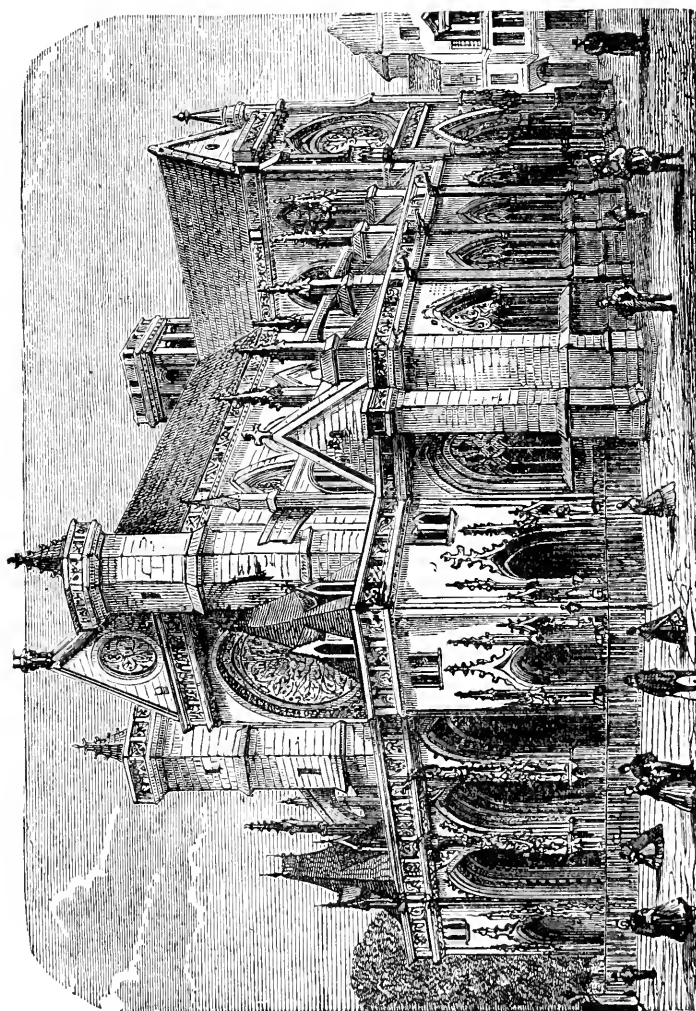
"Well! Sam, I have at last been in St. Shammius Chapel and spent one pious Sunday. I saw you there in the front pew beside your fellow pilgrim, Mrs. Slykes, who seemed a true sheep of the fold, while you, I must confess, looked like a boy's goat with one horn and half a beard, and pummeled into meekness for his hard work. The immense crowd, the stunning music and the flash of the sermon attested the success of your Christian beneficence."

"A regular run," responded Sam Slykes. "Up to time, I tell you. Reminds me of the fast old days, before I took to the law, when I was runnin' train-engineer. No let up yet! Shammius Chapel beats my old locomotive, "Fire Fly," mended, packed, greased and rubbed like a teapot, track straight, pine knots under biler, whizzin' sixty mile an hour."

"Spec, old fellow, spec," replied Planning, "Shammius Chapel *pays!* Your down-town building sold well, and your up-town edifice will rise in value every day. After paying parson, sexton, incidentals and charitable uses, you will have fifty per cent. on investment. Sharp, Sam, commercially and ecclesiastically sharp,—sharp as that fox on your canehead."

Slykes, pleased with the compliments and the recollections of his social and financial success, flourished his stick with delight, and, looking affectionately on the animal there represented, burst out with evident spontaneity:

"Have a fellow-feelin' with the brute, Coolie Planning, that's a fact! He's a sort of brother of mine,



"Slammius chapel pays l"
Page 40.

some great, great, great grandpapa in old times. Our scientific humbugs talk monkey, but give me a fox for my ancestor."

Planning laughed heartily, not boisterously. He had deeply studied the questions of the day to which Slykes had ignorantly alluded. With a curl of his thin lip, he said :

"I am not yet prepared, like other distinguished scientists, to be fathered by a monkey, nor would I pursue the line of your ancestors, or of my own, fearing it might be vegetable hemp rather than from a living animal. But I will ask you a more practical question : How do you fill Shammius Chapel with such crowds ? You seem to run a church even better than you ran a locomotive."

The eye of Slykes twinkled with cunning. A gleam spread over his face. His form dilated and quivered with his nervous excitement as he whirled his cane in rapid circles, and said, in his abrupt slang, always filled with images drawn from the vocation he left, and rarely containing an allusion to the profession he had more recently embraced :

"Thing's plain as a steam gauge ! Parson in trouble—family big—expensive wife and daughters—bills and vacations long—cash and visits short—scandals with the women. Pews wouldn't sell, income bad, congregation slim, and a general grumble. Then comes in Sam Slykes, my boy, to foreclose his mortgage on Shammius Chapel and drive the old failure off. He gets a flash preacher, hires opera-singers, paints inside, puts steam

on front organ and electricity on back, puffs preacher in dailies. Pews sell like strawberries. Crowd comes back like sheep to Spring pasture. Sam Slykes is the biggest toad in the puddle. He walks about with his hands in his pockets and says:—"Here's the boy that runs this concern."

Planning was hugely diverted. He absolutely shook from head to foot with suppressed laughter, and then, to prolong the amusement, said:

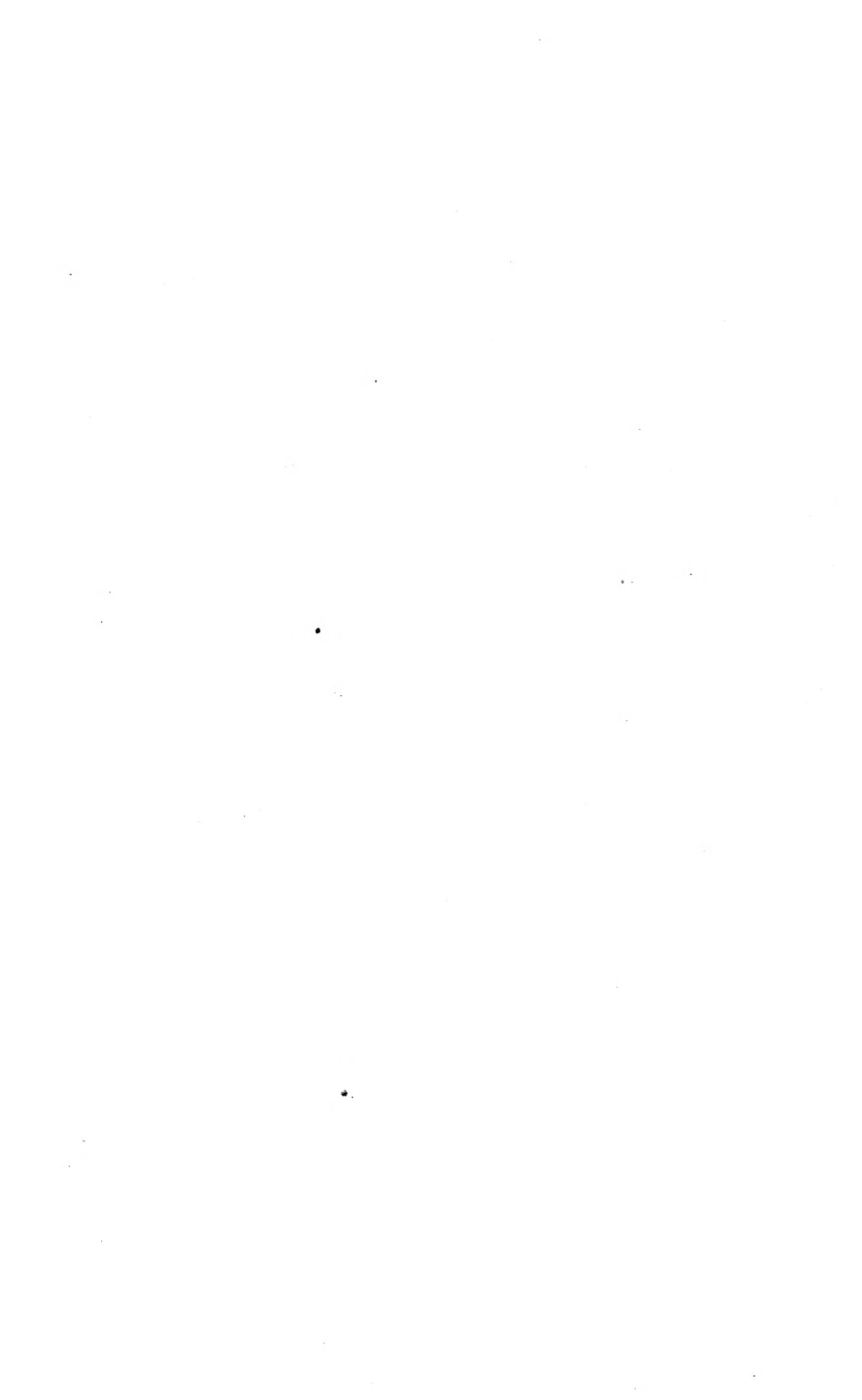
"But, Sam, one thing I cannot comprehend. You don't belong to the church, and I often wonder how you are permitted to take so prominent a part in ecclesiastical affairs."

"Money is the go, Coolie, Church and State! Don't need any other capital. Mrs. Slykes is pious enough for both—trade on her share—I give cash and she gives religion—joint stock concern for the benefit of the public. Where expenses are big, debts heavy and affairs in a snarl, when money comes in, members smile, deacons wink, and parson shuts his eyes like a pious 'possum. Sam Slykes carries pews and pulpit in his pocket, and an awful row they make sometimes."

Even J. Coolie Planning heard this recital with disgust. He knew its absolute truth, and blushed for the degradation of that Christianity which, despite his sins, he believed to be true. The image of his father and the tender memories of his mother had not yet forsaken him. Almost the last thing extinguished in a degraded soul is the light of a pure, Christian home.



"The last thing extinguished in a degraded soul is the light of a pure Christian home." Page 44.



Planning said, with a tone of mingled sadness and cynicism :

“If I remember right, you have driven off three parsons—one because he was too pious, another because he was not pious enough, and a third you forced, in his death-chamber, to sign his resignation, because he married a singing-girl. In all heathendom, I have read of nothing so merciless as your own chapel in its treatment of clergymen.”

“Fact, Coolie! Hard as a new steel rail! I told you myself about our fust parson—face long and black as a smoke stack. Our second spiritual boss got clean crazy—down on railroads—a reg’lar hobby—screamed at us every Sunday like a steam-whistle—said we lied, we bribed, we watered stocks, we cheated widows, robbed orphans and stole from Johnny Bull hide, hoof and horns. Raised my dander, Coolie! Sam Slykes swore he must leave, and soon drove the old monk off. He went away three blocks and set up again. Yesterday sent down our sexton to count noses—just one hundred and eighty-nine in his pews to our fifteen hundred and one.

“Our third parson was a good fellow, handsome and sentimental. Set the women a flutterin’ and a cryin’, and they scared him off with tears, soft sodder and slippers. It was our fourth shepherd that made the mistake in marriage, and who we forced to back out before he died.”

“You have, then, compelled three clergymen to leave, and your women have frightened off a fourth!

Admirable, Sam! Bible Christianity this, old boy, Eh?"

"Coolie, the man who draws the crowd should get the credit. Look at this pocket-book! Greenbacks did the business! Greenbacks is the power, Church and State! Greenbacks is the go in America; above stripes, stars or spread eagle! Greenbacks is as necessary as wood to a locomotive to make fire and steam. When Sam Slykes goes down in a panic, Shammius Chapel goes down with him, sure as fish-blades!"

While this singular conversation was progressing, a man entered the room we must pause to describe. He was much above the middle height, with broad shoulders, an ample chest and a slender waist. His limbs were rounded into graceful fullness, contributing to the elegance of his person, while his carriage was striking, and his bearing easy, cordial and manly. Large feet and rough hands marred, when perceived, the first favorable impression of his appearance. His forehead was broad and high; his nose regular and slightly Roman, with a wide and sensuous nostril; his lips were just too thick; his teeth white, healthful and beautiful; his neck red and animalistic, and his jaw powerful and projecting, yet not repulsive. A black beard, neatly trimmed, corresponded to his dark eyes, and contrasted pleasingly with the rich bloom of his fine face.

You perceived, at a glance, in his form, his features, his manners, his movements, the warring elements of strong intellects and strong passions. Lyman Risk,



"I spent one pious Sunday."
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the President of the INTER OCEANIC RAILWAY, was indeed a handsome fellow. All but the most refined ladies would have pronounced his appearance singularly attractive, and even some of them might, for a time, have been deceived into believing him a man of education and of gentle birth. The instincts of the most discerning would have recoiled from him in an instant, with a painful doubt whether he was ruled by the angel of light or by the angel of darkness. There had been a moment when the paths to good and evil were before him, and consciously in his choice. He then made the irrevocable decision which stamped forever his character and his destiny.

What that decision was our story is yet to show. We omitted that Risk's dress was in the latest style and in the perfection of taste, save that his ring, breastpin, and watch-chain betrayed an immodest tendency to glitter and excited a strong suspicion of vulgarity.

As Lyman Risk approached his confederates—J. Coolie Planning, Vice-President, and Samuel Slykes, Esq., Assistant Attorney of the INTER OCEANIC RAILWAY—he walked more slowly, occasionally glancing over the top of the paper he was reading when attracted by a special loudness of tone or merriment of laughter. Something in the sheet had evidently excited an unusual interest. He seemed reflecting deeply. As he joined his friends, a smile of intelligence and of satisfaction illuminated his features.

“Ah! Lyman,” began Planning, “I noticed you

when you first entered the room. Your cigar is out, and that means thinking. You kept running your fingers through your hair, as if you would pull from your head some new speculation not quite ready to come out. Lyman Risk and that daily oracle, 'YOUNG AMERICA,' mean business. Money's in it, I'm sure. Give us your new idea!"

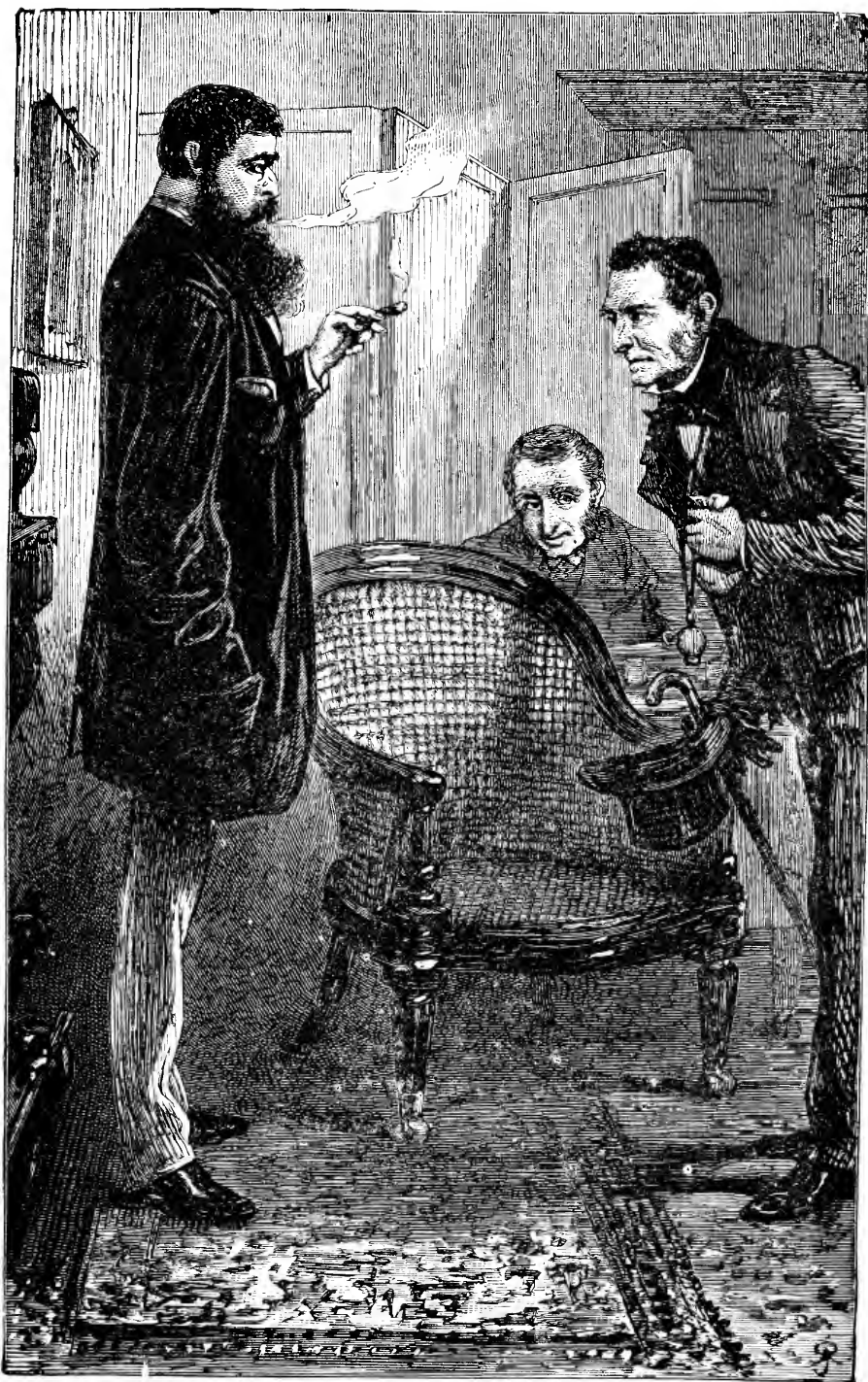
"Out with it, Lyman," said Slykes. "Just bought a pious weekly myself to advertise the INTER OCEANIC. Can spatter parsons like a fast car wheel on a rainy day—will soon conduct the ecclesiastical train, and whistle through it Yankee Doodle and the last opera, from Maine to Texas. Next to a chapel, Sam Slykes wants a newspaper."

"Gentlemen," said Risk, with a self-conscious superiority of intelligence, "my little pear is not yet ripe. But I tell you I have just found half a million in this same copy of 'YOUNG AMERICA.'"

As he ended these words he tapped the paper affectionately with the end of his extinguished cigar.

"Let me ask," inquired Planning, "in what particular part of that honest sheet have you discovered so rich a treasure?"

"Not yet, Coolie. I've had a private cable from England; you shall know in time. My secret is my own until the money is sure. You will be glad enough when you find what help I'll bring the INTER OCEANIC. But why sneer at 'YOUNG AMERICA'? It shows me every day, like a weathercock, how the wind blows in politics, business and religion, and is better for me than



"Money is the go, Church and State."
Page 48.

thermometer, barometer and telegraph together, to 'Old Probabilities, and the American Public.'"

"Yes," interposed Slykes, with a sly and significant chuckle, "a regular steam-guage—shows our republican locomotive steam high or steam low—quivering and trembling like a magnetic needle and always tellin' how the machine runs."

Planning arose from his chair. Indeed for the moment he resembled some old orator flaming with virtuous indignation. There was in him a wealth of argumentative eloquence, and a reproving consciousness, yet lingering, that he had perverted his shining gifts in his mad chase for money. Occasionally the fire would burst forth and show the brilliance of powers which might have graced the bar and adorned the senate. He said, with a flash in his eye, a curl on his lip and a quiver in his tone:

"An infernal humbug, as we three well know; founded on the idea that every man is a knave or a fool, and made by nature to enrich the proprietors of 'YOUNG AMERICA.' That sheet in your hand is for pimps and parsons, cooks and doctors, coachmen and attorneys, waiting-maids and fine ladies, gamblers and merchants—patronized alike by honest mechanics and convicted criminals—democratic, republican, catholic and protestant in the same issue—in one corner sermons and religious notices, and in another advertisements for assignations and abortions—news from London manufactured in this metropolis—reports about things never seen and lies about things really heard—

a catch for all fishes, minnows, sharks and whales. That paper flourishes on the follies and rascalities of the community it purposely demoralises. A vulture feeds on the carcass as it is found; your daily bird of prey has the devilish art of corrupting the corpse with which it stuffs its maw."

"Whew!" exclaimed Slykes, in a tone of astonished admiration. "Fine as a Shammius preacher when he knows the reporter is takin' down his sermon! Coolie thunders like a locomotive runnin' down a mountain. We'll give you a chance, old boy, in our pulpit some Sunday."

"Hard on 'YOUNG AMERICA,' Planning," said Risk, "and no man uses its columns to better advantage than yourself; you abuse your best friend with your cant. We get what we want out of it, and have no right to complain if it suits other people. Men scold at it and read it; scorn it and pay for it; relieve their consciences by saying that it should be driven out of the world and use their pockets to keep it in. I'll bet a case of champagne and a box of Havanas that the INTER OCEANIC RAILWAY makes a half million out of this number in my hand."

Risk held up the paper in the light, shook it mysteriously, and looked at his confederates with a glance of superior foresight.

"Nonsense, Lyman," replied Planning. "You're crazy. I'll stop my preaching and take your bet, and smoke and drink at your expense, with the greatest pleasure."

“I’ll go it double against you, Coolie,” cried Slykes. “Lyman always wins! Hurrah for Mr. President and a half million for the INTER OCEANIC.”

While apparently flourishing, the Railway was, in fact, tottering to its ruin, and exhausting all the artifice and energy of its officers to prevent it from falling. It resembled a vast balanced rock that a touch may topple over. Its plans had been too extended. In the purchase of tributary roads and mines and manufactories and docks and ships, and in a gigantic effort to control the trade of both Asia and Europe, from the Pacific to the Atlantic coast, the INTER OCEANIC RAILWAY had piled over itself a mountain of indebtedness, which, shaken by the earthquake of a recent panic, seemed destined to crash down in one universal destruction. Its owners had been deluded by visions of boundless wealth and power. Indeed they projected on the Pacific coast what was virtually an occidental empire whose magnificent metropolis would have realized the wildest oriental dreams.

In the exigency of these affairs the officers of the Road watched every advantage and resorted to every expedient. Risk and Planning were not unusually bad men, but they were driven to extremities and thought that they could not afford to inquire too scrupulously into questions of morals. The former just now seemed blazing out into an extraordinary excitement. His eyes dilated, his lips and nostrils quivered, and a fire appeared burning in him as he exclaimed wildly:

“Half a million! Half a million! Half a million

for the INTER OCEANIC RAILWAY." He rushed with frantic haste to the telegraphic instrument clicking in the farther corner of the room. He was a master of the keys. Sitting down, his fingers glanced with an inconceivable speed. The message almost spoke from his eyes and his motions. Lightning was in the man as well as in the battery. Both were surcharged. No telegram ever flashed to Boston from more heated fingers or in fewer seconds. Lyman Risk with that subtle fluid was writing *destinies*.





“Like a good angel, in her young beauty, crowned with a halo of love and light.”
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CHAPTER III.

THE LIVINGSTONES.



DNA," said Frank Livingstone to his sister, "will you do me a favor?"

"Anything in my power," she replied. "But what's the matter? You look as grave as if you were trying to make a jury think white is black."

"And I feel as grave as I look," he answered soberly. "The truth is, I thought I knew myself and I find that I was mistaken. Indeed, I sometimes believe another man's soul has come into my body. I am just now everything I have said I never would be. You must interpret me to myself, and tell me honestly what you think about me."

"You impose upon me rather a difficult task," said Edna, gurgling into a laugh. "Possibly if I hold the mirror too faithfully before you, you may not admire the image it reflects. Pause before you repeat the request."

"I know that your looking-glass never flatters me, however it may be partial to yourself," Frank rejoined, brightening into good humor, "and I am ready to see

what I will not admire. Besides, I have an object. Do not fear; I am waiting to study myself in your glass. Hold it up, whatever it may show!"

"I must begin with the features of your early life," answered Edna, quizzically. "If I remember correctly the family traditions, you were taught to read at the unusual age of two, and you gave a precocious promise not yet realized."

"Right," said Frank, slightly blushing and wincing, "however mortifying the consciousness of disappointment to myself and my friends."

"You attacked Latin at six," continued Edna, smiling at her brother's just noticeable discomfiture; "Greek at seven; Algebra at eleven; Geometry at twelve; had completed Homer and Horace at fourteen, and graduated at seventeen with a brilliant valedictory, exciting hopes of a splendid eloquence, so far in your career not realized."

"I perceive," said Frank, confused and a little wounded, "that your mirror is not modern quick-silvered glass, but hard, old polished Roman metal, fused from spears, swords and hatchets. It reflects on me sharply, but tells the stern truth. I see that you have studied my life chronologically; tabulated my faults, recorded my failures and that your mirror takes pleasure in the pain it inflicts."

"You asked me to be faithful, and I must perform my promise to you," answered Edna, with a sweet, sisterly smile. "I am like a sworn witness of yours in court, obliged to tell the truth, the whole truth and

nothing but the truth. Besides, a mirror cannot be bribed. You may break it, but, while clear and whole, it will not lie. It gives back just what it receives."

"Go on," cried Frank, laughing. "I confess your glass cut me a little; but its reflections are true. I have worked hard and fallen below my own ideal and the hopes of my family, and the consciousness of the fact makes me more sensitive than I had supposed."

"Now, let me drop the mirror and ask you a plain question," said Edna, "How do you keep your law papers?"

"Labeled, tied, arranged, numbered, pigeon-holed, and boxed annually, with all the scrupulous accuracy of a premature old bachelor of twenty-eight. But what connection this has with your purpose or mine I do not yet perceive. Enlighten me!"

"Be patient, brother," she replied, with mischief in her look. "Your judge must be deliberate, if you want a sound opinion. I have heard papa say that your addresses to court and jury have none of that glow of the imagination which shone through your youthful essays and orations. He remarked the other morning at breakfast that, in accordance with the spirit of this age of iron, you deal only in hard facts and solid arguments."

"True," replied Frank, "and sometimes I reproach myself for not following my original bent. Possibly my flight would have been higher had I not clipped my own wings. But I sacrificed my reputation to my sense of duty."

"You are too fast, Frank," Edna continued. "We are not yet ready for our conclusion. I will resume your history and complete your portrait. You have traveled over Europe, stood on the pyramids, explored Jerusalem, looked down over India from the Himalayas, said good-morning to Hong Kong, good-evening to Tokio, and shaken hands with San Francisco on your way back to New York. You have all the indications of a practical character. You love whist, chess and science; read only the best novels and attend only the best plays; eat and drink sparingly and cultivate your club moderately; dance well and waltz better; have never been in love, yet incline to the ladies; are even fond of making calls with your mother and sister; don't scold when they make you wait and escort them kindly in their shopping. Now, with this preface, I am prepared to exhibit your portrait and prove to yourself that you are a model American young gentleman, with the splendid future you deserve to be exceeded by a brilliance beyond your wildest dreams."

Edna playfully took her brother's hand, and, leading him to the farther end of the room, unexpectedly confronted him with his own image in the mirror, saying:

"There, Frank! Behold yourself! Read your character in more faithful lines and colors than I or any painter or writer can draw on canvas or sketch by words."

Frank did not hesitate to obey the direction of his sister. He looked straight into his own face and

interpreted himself to himself. The lesson was unmistakable. That strong and graceful person, just below the middle size; those honest, manly curls; that clear, piercing, intelligent eye; that open, noble brow; those compressed lips; that countenance, breathing and kindling with purpose, integrity and intellect, were revelations to his inmost soul that he had mistaken neither himself nor his vocation. His sister at his side smiled on him like a good angel, in her young beauty, and seemed now in his eyes almost crowned with a halo of love and light. Her nose, artistically perfect in its Grecian outline, the delicate bloom in her cheek, the grace of her form and the expression of her pure face, beaming from a womanly heart and a noble mind, thrilled him with a joy and gratitude unfelt before. He kissed and embraced her with a sweet, fraternal tenderness and pride.

After this expression of his affection, Frank Livingstone placed his sister's right arm in his own left, conducted her through the hall, over the piazza and across the lawn until they stood on a green and lofty bank overhanging the Hudson.

It was an early morning in June. The young sun was just leading the day over the hills, flashing into gold the waves of the river, and burning and glittering from sword and musket as the cadets on the West Point shore marched and manœuvred in their early review, while the music of the band came softly over the waters and was echoed in mellow notes among the hills.

The rose, fresh in the morning dew, shed fragrance from its bloom, and the lilac and the honeysuckle, and the just mown grass, breathed on the air a delicious sweetness.

Nature encircled that brother and sister with a canopy of love and beauty, and poured around them an incense from her heart.

"Edna," began Frank, after gazing long on the scene, "I thank you for what you have done. All things are coming back to me in their true light. You now deserve to have my secret, never yet divulged."

"I am ready to hear it, brother," she replied, with the tenderest affection, "and hope that you will never regret the confidences of this morning."

Earth and heaven were smiling to each other. A fish leaped out of the water in its joy. The mocking-bird was thrilling forth its most passionate raptures. Indeed, the whole feathered orchestra was singing around them.

"You spoke, Edna," he said, "of the unfulfilled expectations excited by my boyish eloquence. I determined early to control my exuberance as an example of culture and restraint in our young country, and to form myself after the classic models, ancient and modern. Moreover, I resolved to advise my clients where possible to compromise, never to confuse an honest witness, however detrimental to my case, and never to appeal to the prejudices and passions of a court or jury. My ambition was to show the world that the son of an old and wealthy family could be a

gentleman and yet have the most brilliant professional success. As a consequence I have seen unscrupulous and uncultured men blazing over me into a dazzling but temporary prosperity. Still, I have been sustained by a consciousness of right and an assurance, ultimately, of wider and more enduring influence. My dreams are over. Since my return from Europe I have found myself a fool."

"You astonish me, Frank," cried Edna, in alarm. "I cannot understand this. This is some strange hallucination."

"Just now I thought so, under the influence of your words. But the cloud comes back again. I am a dunce, a block, an idiot, and I know not whether I may not in the end be a hopeless lunatic."

"Frank, this is sheer craziness," said Edna, more puzzled than before. "Explain your meaning."

"You do not know, sister, that I am neglecting my office, abandoning my clients, sacrificing all the aims and ambitions of my life, and stultifying myself to myself, and chasing shadows like a boy,* or rather like a madman."

"My dear, dear Frank, you must instantly disclose to me all that is in your heart. Are you in love?"

The question was so abrupt and so unexpected that young Livingstone was startled and confused. All the blood of his body seemed rushing into his face. He became crimson as the rose at his feet. Recovering himself he burst out.

"In love? I am as uncertain on this point as

on every other. I can neither affirm it nor deny it. Even if I were, this, under the circumstances, would only be additional proof of my folly or my lunacy. For a fellow who never felt the flame before, to turn madman just this side of thirty and rave after a girl he scarcely ever saw and whom he never heard converse, is an idiocy without hope, and to which I never believed a sensible lawyer, and above all a Livingstone, could be reduced."

Edna smiled with a feeling of relief. She saw that there was no desperate peril in her brother's case. Taking his hand she said:

"Tell me the whole truth, Frank, as you promised. The physician must understand the patient's disease and the confessor the penitent's sin. Ha! light begins to dawn! I have a vision: Steamer Britannia on the wide Atlantic; a fair English girl; morning walks and moonlight talks; looking over the ocean and spying sails together with a glass; a novel in the afternoon; whist and chess in the saloon in the evening. Yes, your look betrays you. I have the secret without the confession."

Edna paused in her playfulness, alarmed at the pain and gloom in her brother's face. His solemnity impressed her almost with awe.

"You have, indeed, my sister, begun at the right place and yet you are greatly in error. I will give you a plain recital of facts. Just before we sailed from Liverpool a special tender, late in the evening, brought four persons on the Britannia, known appar-



"I never saw them after I left the ship."

Page 72.

ently only to the Captain. For several days they did not leave their staterooms. When at last they appeared on deck I was astonished to see persons who bore every mark of rank and distinction. The eldest, a man of seventy, nearly resembled Washington in his stature, form and countenance, having in his aspect the same mingling benevolence and majesty. Without comparison, the younger gentleman was the handsomest man on whom I ever looked and was evidently an eminent military officer. And what shall I say of the ladies? You will think I have turned poet or fool. If the elder, a brunette of forty, represented the glory of womanhood, the girl not twenty, and a contrast in everything to her mother, typified its sweetest classic beauty. Now comes the saddest experience of my life—so sad that I have not ventured before to tell it even to you.

The Britannia encountered a fearful storm. Both ladies were lashed in their chairs to enjoy the terrific spectacle, and the officer was standing before them, when a lurch of the ship threw him over the railing into the ocean. We saw him hang for a moment on the crest of a mountain wave and then sink for ever. Rescue was impossible in such a fury of the elements. But, O God, who shall describe what followed? The speechless agony; the sobs, the moans, the cries, the frenzied gestures imploring help, and then the silence and impotence of despair! I saw the ladies a few times afterwards on deck. Niobe is grief in stone—theirs was agony in living hearts. When our vessel

landed in Boston harbor, they and the venerable man I have described must have remained on board to escape observation. I never saw them after I left the ship, and could learn nothing of them by inquiry."

Edna heard this recital breathless and in tears. She now comprehended the reason of her brother's recent abstraction and silence, and inclination to solitude. Tenderly kissing him, she said:

"Frank, I thank you for this confidence. It draws us together by a closer tie. Our own lives seem involved in this mysterious narration. Your words are solemn as destiny. And you have no clew whatever to these persons?"

None! I feel that I have no right to intrude on their privacy, and yet I am irresistibly impelled to discover who and where they are. I agree with you, that they are in some way to be linked with our own future. Indeed, their images so fill my mind that I can do nothing in my business. I neglect my office, and I and my affairs seem rushing to destruction. It is for this I reproach myself and have sought advice from you. Surely it is not wise for mere fancies and impressions so to abandon the practical affairs of life."

"All will be made plain," said Edna, with confidence. "Heaven, in its own time, will reveal to you the path of your duty. Under the circumstances, I do not think your conduct either erratic or culpable."

"Thank you, Edna; thank you, my sister. Your words are full of light, strength and inspiration. A cloud is lifted from me. Last night I dreamed that

I saw the two ladies and the aged gentleman standing together on the verge of a frightful precipice and over a roaring cataract, while human demons were leering and grinning above them in the clouds. A voice, shrieking my own name, awoke me from my sleep."

"This, Frank," Edna exclaimed, with great resolution and animation, "is another indication that you have a work to perform in regard to these English strangers. Go forward! you will find your help and your reward from Heaven. It is your destiny."

The brother and sister now joined their parents at the breakfast table. When the meal was finished, Judge Livingstone asked his son into his study.

"Frank," he said, "you must go to Albany on the evening train."

His son started and showed an evident disinclination for departure on so short a notice.

"Father," he replied, "is it absolutely necessary? I have on my mind a matter in the city of the utmost importance."

"I am not surprised," answered the Judge, "at this unusual disinclination, since I have noticed for some weeks that you seemed some person other than yourself. Whether your affair be of the head or of the heart, I am unable to decide; but I know that the urgency of the case in Albany is extreme."

"May I inquire what the particular necessity may be?"

"Do you know Jude Oilip?" asked the Judge.

"I know that he is a rascal who lives by bribing

other rascals, and has built, from the proceeds of his villanies, one of the most splendid houses on the Avenue. He drives the finest horses in the Park."

"Well! Jude is now in full blast at the Capitol. He no longer works secretly. Indeed, he seems to glory in his vocation as a lobbyist, openly boasting that he buys the Legislative donkeys, and owns them, ears and all, and drives them and whips them as he pleases. Unlike all other animals, food only stimulates their appetites. The more you pay the more you have to pay. This legislative greed is insatiable. And Jude is secure in his conscious ownership. When bought, a man is in the power of his purchaser and ready for the next more desperate villany."

"Is there no escape?" asked Frank, anxiously. "I know that there are some honest men in the Legislature. Where are the Courts? Can nothing be done?"

"We have a personal interest in that question," answered the Judge. "Unless we bestir ourselves, this INTER OCEANIC RAILWAY will obtain its charter, and for its depot confiscate this very home of our fathers. Such tyranny would shake any throne in Europe."

"This is abominable," exclaimed Frank. "I fear, too, that our municipal corporations, in every part of this country, are taxing and borrowing most recklessly, while most of their money, instead of improving and beautifying our towns and cities, is in the pockets and palaces of these shameless villains. Our own metropolis owes more than a hundred millions of dollars, and

yet her docks and streets and parks are a disgrace to civilization."

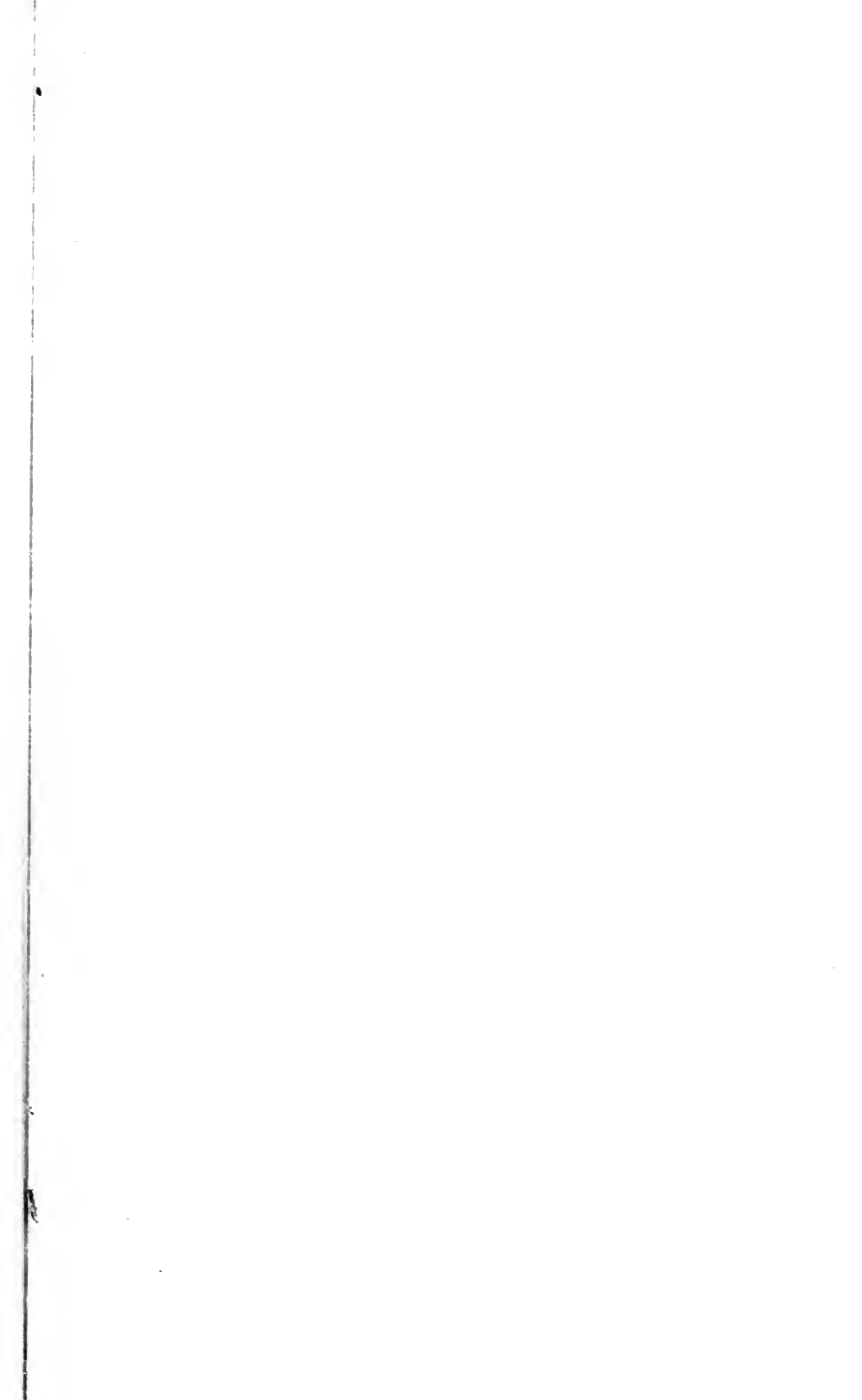
"Too true, my son; too true!" said the Judge sadly. "The cloud over our country was never blacker even during our civil war. No mediæval barons were more daring in their plunder or more ruthless in their tyranny than our municipal rings and corrupt corporations; and yet in every community, in every legislature, at the bar and on the bench, are to be found honest men who will yet save us from ruin. The malady, after all, is not in the blood of the body politic. And Frank," he added, rising from his chair and looking like the impersonation of resolute and indignant virtue, "I will never cease fighting the rascals until the right triumphs."

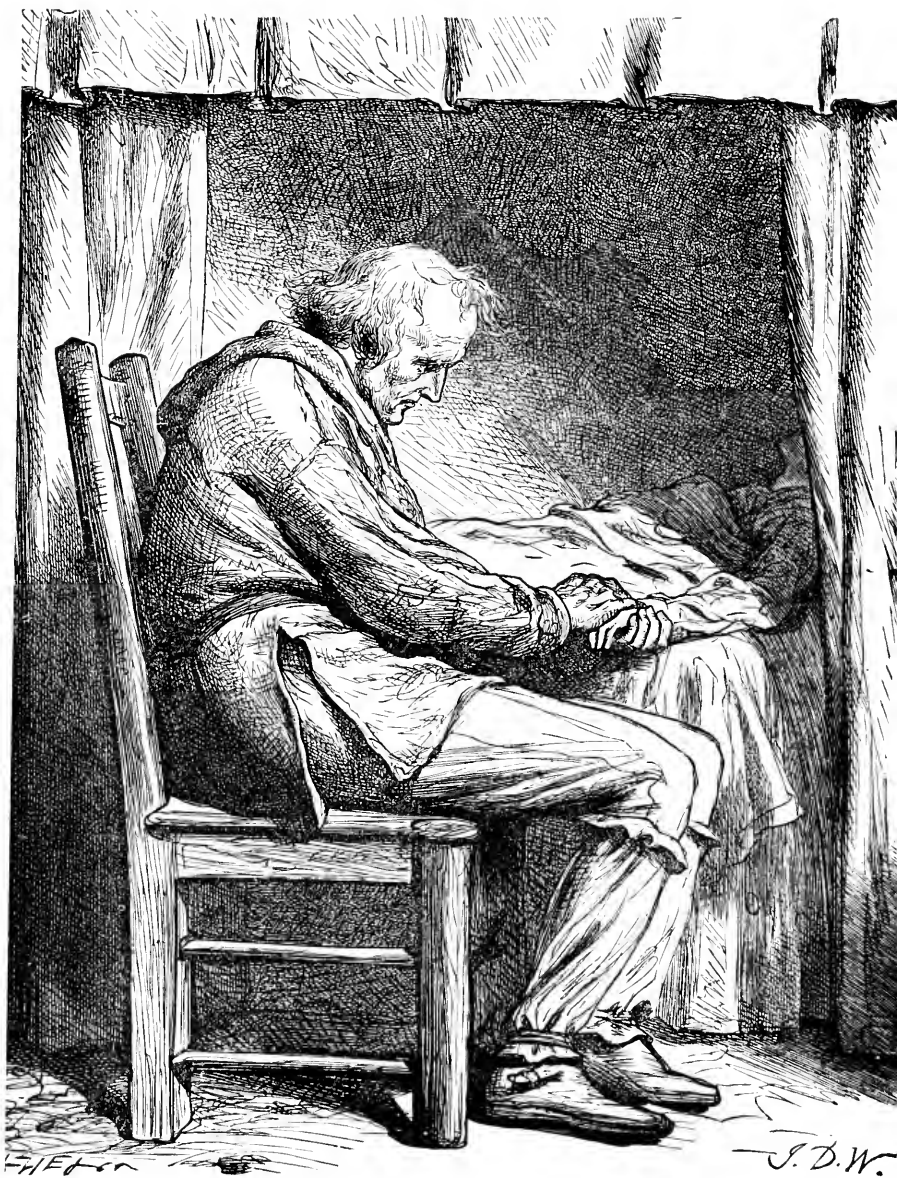
"I am glad to hear you say so, father," exclaimed Frank, kindled into a fresh enthusiasm of courage. "Such words from you have great weight and inspire strong hope. I will co-operate in every possible way. It is now exceedingly inconvenient and disagreeable for me to go to Albany, but I will make immediate preparations and be ready for the next train."

"Right, my son, right," said the Judge, warmly shaking Frank's hand. "I perceive that you are true to the lessons of your youth. We have a great work to accomplish, but Heaven will prove our help and our shield. Farewell! farewell!"

Judge Livingstone represented one of the oldest and wealthiest families in the country. He had vast estates, including a noble mansion, with ample and

beautiful grounds, on the Hudson, and an almost palatial home in the city. His ancestors had been long faithful adherents to the king, and then revolutionary patriots, after the conservative type of Washington and Hamilton. Nor was he without admiration for the refinements of a court, the security of an aristocracy, and the stability of a monarchy, founded on the popular intelligence and guarded by constitutional provisions. But he knew that the social and political institutions of Europe were impossible in America. He was, therefore, absolutely faithful to the Republic. What he most dreaded was an ignorant and vulgar monied aristocracy, whose baleful monopolies would be crushing as even slavery itself. This he believed the worst curse of any nation. In him, it excited not only opposition, but repugnance and loathing. It was to extend and energise his influence that he accepted judicial office and trained Frank for the bar. He and his son also mingled in the primary assemblies of the people, and were always ready, by their pens, their speeches, their time and their money to promote the great object of their lives. The ladies of the family shared their spirit, and while there had never been any formal explanation or agreement, yet all were acquiring popular instincts and working together toward a popular end. Thus their aristocratic traditions were gradually exchanging themselves for more kindly democratic sympathies, which in the end would identify them with the people.





"O Poverty! how fearful thy face! more than death thou art the dread of our humanity!" Page 128.

CHAPTER IV.

POVERTY.



YMAN RISK had interpreted a few lines in "YOUNG AMERICA," announcing the death of Colonel Neville and the arrival of the family in Boston, with an almost preternatural sagacity. It was a mere reportorial hint which the Livingstones never saw. By means of it, with one quick glance, Risk had pierced the situation. An examination of the railway books recording the shares confirmed his impressions. He followed his telegram by his person in the Victoria palace-car to Boston without communicating the secret of his purpose to his confederates. The Nevilles were discovered with some difficulty and he had the address to win their confidence and convey them to the Metropolis in a style splendid even to their aristocratic English tastes.

Lord Arlington had been paralyzed into feebleness by the fatigues and excitements of the voyage and was placed on a couch in the car in a state of dumb and pitiable impotency. All these things made Risk's services

more needful and acceptable, and enabled him gradually to introduce to the family Planning, and even Slykes, without exciting suspicion or disgust. The physician was their paid tool, and all the business and correspondence of the Nevilles passed into their hands. The helplessness of these noble ladies, in a strange land, and the illness of the Earl, greatly aided the plans of their pretended friends, who took every means of increasing the barriers between them and all the world. They had been established in a commodious and attractive house, in a retired, but fashionable avenue, where they lived absolutely unknown, except to Risk and his confederates. Mrs. Neville had already parted with her railway shares at an enormous sacrifice, and also with all her jewels and other valuables, except her diamond ring, and was now confronted with the necessity of selling even that precious gift from her husband and removing with her helpless old father and her lovely daughter to more economical and obscure lodgings in an unpleasant region of the city. Trouble and sorrow had compelled her to make Lucy the sharer of her counsels, and this established between them a premature confidence and sympathy. The fair fingers and bosom of the daughter, too, had been gradually stripped of adorning gems and gold, but she was only the more charming in the light of her own native grace and simple beauty.

“Lucy,” said her mother, in tears, “we have parted with everything except this brilliant on my finger, and I confess that I have not the courage to remove it.”



“Trouble and sorrow established between them confidence and sympathy.”
Page 80.

"Oh, mamma," the girl replied, with bitter sobbings and the deepest anguish, "this is dreadful! Can you not prevent it? Wait a few days. We will surely soon obtain remittances from England."

"I have written and waited, my daughter, and waited and written in vain. Some mysterious influence seems around us and against us. First your father's death, and then your grandfather's helpless suffering! A barrier rises to separate us from all we love, and we appear to be deserted by God and man. Poverty stands glaring in our eyes. It seems more than human nerves and souls can bear. Soon we will be forced to leave this house and seek one cheaper and less burdensome. Oh, how I dread this, on my dear father's account! We are sinking into hopeless abysses of misery."

"Can I not write, or teach, or sew, or do anything for our support?" cried Lucy, overcome by her emotions, and, above all, by her sense of helplessness. "Oh, I feel so weak, and so ignorant of all that could help us!"

"Alas, my Lucy!" replied Mrs. Neville, with a shiver of terror at the thought of her daughter's exposure. "What could you do in this strange city? You know nothing of its perils and have never been taught to labor. Nothing so deplorable as our aristocratic tastes and habits, with nothing for their support! I am in despair! Oh, I would rather tear my heart from my body than this ring from my finger! But, alas, my flesh can bring us no relief, and the gold

and the gem will support us, perhaps, until aid comes from home."

"But, mamma, that diamond is the gift of dear papa. He placed it on your finger. To remove it would be too terrible. Oh, never, never take it off!"

The girl wept in her sorrow, and the tears, more precious than gems, sparkled on her cheek, while love breathes new charms over her splendid beauty. Hearts so melted can never be ice again. Only suffering turns to sympathetic drops the hard crystal of a soul.

While Lucy was weeping there was a sharp, quick, impatient ring at the door-bell, and she had just time to retire as Mr. Samuel Slykes entered the room.

"Good-morning, Mrs. Neville," that gentleman exclaimed, in his high, nasal tone, and with a peculiar twitch of his brow and gleam of his eye. "Good-morning; sorry to see you so sad. This world is as hard as a steel-rail, and that's well thumped and pounded by our train-wheels, I tell you."

"Yes, Mr. Slykes; my troubles have been almost beyond endurance. Is there no more money in the bank?"

"Not a red, madam, not a red. Your bank account's like a tender without wood or water. I have done all in my power—sold stocks and jewels and other ornaments to best advantage, but you draw checks as if you owned the Bank of England. You must learn to shut down the brakes on your expenses, or you'll be flyin' the track in spite of me. Can't keep you on without more economy."

"Mr. Slykes," she replied, with a repelling and offended dignity, "your tone and your words are not agreeable. Such interference with my affairs I will not permit. I perceive in you a familiarity you never before attempted. Do not repeat it again. Remember that this house is mine, and you remain in it on the condition of your respectful behavior."

"Pardon me, madam. No offense intended, as the locomotive said to the cow it smashed."

"Then," returned Mrs. Neville, despite her sorrow, smiling at the queerness of the man and the quaintness of his speech, "I must infer from your own comparison, that you, Mr. Samuel Slykes, are the murderous machine, while I am the innocent and unsuspecting, but slain and mangled victim. Possibly, there may be more in your suggestion than you wish me to comprehend at present."

Even Slykes, in his stupendous assurance, had to admit to himself that for once in his life his slang had betrayed him into a blunder. Usually, he was happy in a consciousness of superlative merit and an infallibility more secure and serene than any Pope ever enjoyed. He knew that, without clearly meaning it, the lady had expressed the exact truth. All the plunder from her stocks and gems and gold had passed to the account of the INTER OCEANIC RAILWAY, to help it through its gigantic struggle for existence. Slightly coloring and hesitating, for the first time in his honorable existence, he exclaimed:

"No, Mrs. Neville, no! Sam Slykes ran off the track

for once—clean throwed over by a lady. I have been the blessin' of your life in raisin' money, and Lyman, Coolie and myself will bring you through your troubles like three locomotives on a coal train."

"All this may be true, Mr. Slykes, and I will not now question your assertion. At all events, I am placed in circumstances where I am compelled to trust you, but I am not quite ready to take this ring from my finger."

"Bound to come, madam; bound to come," replied Slykes, with a brutal assurance and indelicacy. "Old England has forsaken you. She never answered a letter. Your expenses here are big, I must tell you—doctor's bills, nurse's bills, baker's bills, butcher's bills, eatin' bills, drinkin' bills, wearin' bills, washin' bills, servant bills, and all the other bills that take dollars out of a bank, like blood out of a sick man, or steam out of a locomotive, runnin' without wood or water at the rate of fifty mile an hour."

"Mr. Slykes, this is more offensive than ever. I insist that you change your manner towards me. You are not justified by circumstances in using such words to me."

"Can't help it, Mrs. Neville. If I pay your bills, that ring is bound to come off—bound to come, as your dollars were bound to go out of the bank. You now owe Sam Slykes a gentle thousand, advanced out of his own pocket, and he must have his money, sure as a steam biler won't hiss without fuel."

Mrs. Neville was aroused to intense indignation and

disgust by such a coarse and loathesome speech. There was something in this vulgar villain and his eager assertion of his power which excited her anger more than her fears.

A horrible suspicion flashed over her that she had been betrayed, fleeced and ruined by a gang of rascals. She saw that if Slykes was a villain, Risk was a villain, and Planning was a villain. In the excitement of her suspicion and the keenness of her agony, she said all she should have concealed, and all that could tempt the cupidity of a rogue like Slykes.

“Do you know, sir,” she inquired, “the value of this jewel you are so eager to secure?”

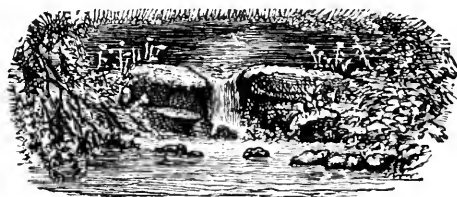
As she spoke, she extended her hand, and her white finger passed through a brilliant gleam of the morning sun, streaming in between the openings of the curtains. It was a spectacle to be remembered. The magnificent diamond burned in a blaze of glory, and flashed and glittered as if showering from itself, in an exuberance of conscious wealth and joy, the sparkles of innumerable suns. In the eyes and face of Slykes were responsive gleams of eager and voracious delight.

Oh, thou beautiful gem, born in the ages of the past, from dark carbon and bright flame, amid the volcanic throes of a forming world, why didst thou come forth from thy depths to awaken the greed of men? What passions rage around thee! What plots and wiles and wars! The envy of beauty, the avarice of wealth, the ambitions of kings are kindled in thy innocent light! How often hast thou been bought with the blood of

murder and even the carnage of battle, until around thy beauty is a red glare of ruined hearts and lives ! Glorious as thou art, perhaps it had been better to have slept in thy native darkness than to have delighted human eyes while arousing human passions, and setting in motion such trains of guilt and miseries.

Mrs. Neville continued: "This jewel has a history. It has sparkled on the brow of Indian kings. My Oscar snatched it with his heroic hand from the flames of Delhi and obtained it as a reward from the British Government, had it set in this ring, and placed it himself around this finger. Mr. Slykes, I am not prepared to remove it; and I must say to you plainly that, after your manner this morning, it shall never be given to you. When my mind is ready and the exigencies inexorable, I will send a note to Mr. Risk. He will behave with the kindness and delicacy due to a lady in distress."

Having thus spoken, Mrs. Neville retired with an inexpressible dignity, and Sam Slykes slunk out of the door and down the street, and to his own house, confounded and overpowered by such an exhibition of virtuous indignation, excited by injustice and distress.





CHAPTER V.

VILLONT'S DEN.



SHORTLY after the events we have related, Slykes could have been seen passing down the most crowded street of the busy city. He was thinking, and twirling, as he walked, his sympathetic cane. Darting from the street he ran up a flight of stairs, made some brief inquiries, hastened down and mingled once more with the human stream. After pursuing his way for many blocks, he turned into an obscure and narrow street, and, twisting and winding, stood at last before a tall, ungainly building, whose cheerless ugliness caused a chill in the beholder. Mounting story after story, he pushed himself along dirty, dismal passages, until he stopped and knocked at a massive door. There was a rustle within. A chair scraped on the floor. At last the door swung noiselessly open, and Slykes stood within. A singular being confronted him. Raising his voice, he cried out, in his peculiar tone:

“Counting your day’s profits, my sallow beauty?”

Sly fellows, you detectives. Sly as a tramp stealing his ride under a freight train ”

“Monsieur, Sleeks,” replied Villont, with an impish laugh. “You, sare, and I, sare, know dis world, and dat hambog in your beesness and in mine is von good cape-tal, and we both have von great huge in-ves-tee-ment.”

The deformity laughed, or rather grimaced after this hit. His fiery, piercing eyes gleamed under his shaggy brows with a species of hideous delight. Every wrinkle of his yellow face twitched and twisted. His crooked mouth showed his unsightly teeth, as he leered with an almost infernal grin, while the spectacles across his wizzened brow grew tremulous with excitements of the skin, and his small, nervous fingers jerked the tassels of his worn and disproportioned gown.

“Must be up to thieves to nab them, my detective innocent,” said Slykes. “Rascality’s the capital in catchin’ rascals, and no man has bigger stock in trade than you, Villont. You’re packed full as a freight car in grain movin’ season. But where’s Midge—that little angel in the devil’s den?”

The Frenchman started back as if he had been struck. Only one light was left in his wicked old heart—it was Midgetto. He trained the boy to his vile arts, often with a cruel sternness, not sparing hard blows; but, after all, he loved him, and worked for him, and intended for him his accumulating wealth. And Midge was a beautiful child. His Italian face

was more suitable to palaces than the dark hole in which he lived, and he seemed like some cherub who, by a fatal mischance, had been lured into the service of the pit.

"Sare," he almost shrieked, "you let my Midge alone—you speak not his name—he and you must be far apart as de poles; as de star from de earth; as de ends of de universe."

Slykes, thrusting his hands down deeply in his pockets, stood staring into the face of Villont, whose little, fiery, cross eyes darted their flames in opposite directions.

"Old tight-fist," cried Sam, "I want Midge myself, and sure as a steam-whistle I'll have him."

"No, no," replied Villont, shaking his head and hands to enforce his negative. "Midge me light, me comfort, me little child; you indulge von vast joke."

"Mistaken, my French beauty," said Slykes, with an impudent and aggravating coolness; "give him or hang, old money bags! Sam Slykes, just now, is a working locomotive, bent on business. He knows what he's after and what he can do. He'll have Midge, sure as you studied Jesuit under the Pope."

Villont started at this allusion and trembled violently. He was not usually taken off his guard, but Slykes had unnerved him in a moment. With a violent effort to recover himself, he said: "Vot dat you mean, Monsieur Sleeks? Villont study vit de holy fathers in de Eternal Citie. Ha! too funnie, too funnie! Villont Jesuit Priest! Imposseebeel!"

"Fifteen years learnin' piety with the Pope's folks, and a precious saint they made of you! Why did you leave them, old virtue? Tell me, or give me Midge."

Villont glared on his tormentor with fury and with terror. Slykes was gaining the ascendancy over him with a serpentine fascination. His attenuated frame shook as he stared and trembled. Lifting his broken voice, he almost shrieked:

"A lie, Sam Sleeks, von deevileesh, helleesh lie; von lie from the black pit of sat-tan! Leave dis appartemen'."

"Not gone yet," said Slykes, surveying him with his peculiar look of cool and unequalled impudence. "Not gone, as the balked locomotive said when the boys greased the rails. Sam Slykes sticks to his friends like whale oil to a steam slide. Why did you leave Rome, old piety? Why did you say good-by to your shovel hat? Why did you take off your black gown and stop goin' round the holy city like a hungry crow? Why did you come to America and play Jesuit in the detective business? Tell me that!"

Slykes stepped nearer his victim and looked into his dilated eyes with a sharp stare, adding:

"I know a thing or two. A woman's in the case, Villont! Ha! yes; a woman, my Jesuit innocent."

Villont shrank into himself. His face turned black with hate and fear. He would have leaped through the floor—out of the window—into the sea—anywhere



"You own the man whose crime you know."
Page 97.

to hide himself. In an impotence of doubt and terror he burst forth :

“Sleeke, you be von imp, von demon, von foul feend, von deveel, von sat-tan himself, come up from de flames.”

Slykes looked and laughed as if he properly answered to these personages one and all.

“Yes, Villont,” he resumed, “a woman in the case ; countess, young, rich, beautiful ; came to confession ; told you her story ; touched your soft heart ; pitied her for her sins, and fled with her to Arno Castle ; caught, tried, convicted by the Holy Church, and came to America. Unfrocked, my venerable goodness. Had a son born here ; our pretty Midge—the boy I want and the boy I’ll have. Where’s the woman, my cut-throat ? Sam Slykes knows all about it. Give me Midge, my poison-dropper, and do my work, or hang by the neck until you’re dead, dead, dead.”

You own the man whose crime you know. He becomes your slave. No longer his own, you can use him as your property, your tool, your thing, and you can lead him on and on and on, into deeper gloom, guilt and danger. Such is the penalty of sin. If man cannot escape man, how much less Omniscience !

A dark history, in an instant, passed in blood and flame before the soul of Villont. He saw it all, and he saw himself. The events of his life flashed over him like lightning. His bright childhood, his pious youth, his vow, his discipline, his sacred studies, his

cell, where he saw the fires of the pit and heard its screams, and then witnessed the dropping blood of the crucifixion, followed by the ascending triumph; his fraternity, the chair and bed and table and stone-floor; his beads and matins and vespers; his pious works; his peace of conscience, and his serene, priestly joy; contrasting with these the fair face of the confessing girl, her penitent tears and tones, the dark temptation, the final seduction; the brief whirl of guilty pleasure; the detection, the trial, the condemnation; the flight, the birth of Midge, the first thought of murder, the resolve, the plan, the midnight drop, the reproving look, the gasp, the agony, the death, the burial, the grave—all rushed and glared and burned and shrieked about him, until he staggered and leaned against the wall. Then were visible the wonderful effects of those long, stern years of discipline. He recovered by one strong effort of his will, and stood as calm, as keen, as cold, as when he heard the first knock at the door, which was the prelude to this scene of terror.

“Monsieur Sleekes,” he repeated, with a slow, firm, and easy determination, “you want de boy—de leetle Midge. You shall have him with pleashure—de greatest pleashure posseebel!”

But the task of subjection was not yet completed. Slykes went straight to the wall. He touched a spring. A concealed door flew open. Villont's treasure-room was revealed. With the leer and cunning of a fiend the torturer pointed within the place, saying:

“A hundred thousand for a rainy day! Sly fox,

Villont! Ha! a prudent old piety! Sam Slykes can hang you by the neck and take your gold and greenbacks for the benefit of the state, getting one-half for his precious information. He can explode you like a signal-cap under a train-wheel."

Villont stared and glared in a bewildering amazement. His power of resistance was gone. He passed under the dominion of his base and remorseless employer until the hour of vengeance should strike in *his* favor its hoarse and hollow notes.

"Villont," resumed Slykes, "hear me and mind me. No triffin' or dodgin'. Tell Midge to act as I say, and send him to-morrow to live in a family at five hundred on the avenue."

"Right, Monsieur Sleekes, right; all right, sare. It shall be as you wish."

"Now, I want the truth from you, my honeymoon—bright as a headlight when the reflector's rubbed. Has Frank Livingstone employed you to find two English ladies and an old English gentleman?"

"Certainement, me good sare. We search de citie in all de various directions—everywhere, everywhere."

"Have you found them?"

"No, no; dey baffle us! No trace of dem at all any where."

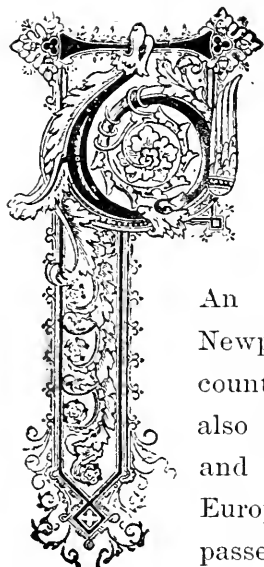
"Sit down, now," says Slykes, "at that telegraph—tell the lightnin' Sam Slykes wants it, and click off, through your detective room, a message to Frank Livingstone, in these words, exact as the figgers on a steel rail: 'The English ladies have gone to Chicago.'"

Villont took his place at the instrument to flash along its innocent wires the confusing lie destined to mislead the man who was devoting himself to the rescue of tried and suffering virtue. The thin fingers moved over the keys with a light but sure touch, afraid to disobey the tyrant commanding their skilled and flying motions. When the message had been telegraphed, the hideous operator paused in his compelled work, still retaining his seat. Planting himself before Villont, Slykes, with a brazen and remorseless voice and look, gave his parting directions:

“My own monk, don't you forget! Midge goes to-morrow into service of the English people at five hundred on the avenue—they want him for waiter and errand boy, and I want him to bring here to your honest hands all their letters to and from England; and you, old true heart, must give them to my messenger for me—me, mind you, no one else—no copyin', no sellin' out to Frank Livingstone, no treachery of any kind for love, money or revenge—none of it, my gray-haired goodness, or that little yellow neck will make acquaintance with ten feet of hard rope, and that fair carcass be swung, as it deserved to be twelve years ago, up towards heaven by a gallows length, and then Sam Slykes will be into your money bags. If you turn false, my sweet reliability, you had better have a cow-catcher fly through your ribs when the lightnin' train's making up for lost time.”

CHAPTER VI.

BROTHER AND SISTER.



THE LIVINGSTONES usually came to their seat on the Hudson just before the bloom of the rose in June and left it after the glory of the foliage of October had vanished.

An occasional week at Saratoga and Newport varied the monotony of their country life. Their Summer home was also an attraction to many charming and distinguished people both from Europe and America. The season just passed had been particularly gay and agreeable, although Frank Livingstone had been frequently absent and noticeably inclined to abstraction and solitude. All the yellow of the hickory and the chestnut had disappeared, the brilliant and varied tints of the maple were no longer visible, even the mingled red and green of the oak had been replaced by a dull russet-brown, and the magnificence which blazes from an autumnal American forest had been exchanged for those dry leaves and naked limbs that show nature to be preparing for the chill and gloom of Winter. One evening in November, in the the parlor of their city

residence, Frank and Edna were sitting together, when the latter said, with a bright laugh,—

“Brother, you seem to have turned all the sober Livingstone heads in the family in your wild chase after two unknown English ladies and an equally unknown English gentleman. Even mamma and I have begun to dream about them.”

“Ha! Edna,” said Frank, startled into an intense interest, “that is indeed strange. I hope that you will tell me me your dream.”

“My Ivanhoe, my Richard Cœur de Lion, my Don Quixote, my flower of chivalry and sword of knight-hood, my brave hero of romance, engaged in the deliverance of wronged and oppressed beauty—if you will confess yourself in love I will relate my dream. Only the tender passion, with its sacred flame, could inspire such exploits and adventures.”

“Nonsense, Edna, nonsense. You are taking advantage of my secret to bring down my bachelorhood to the dust. You know that a practical fellow like myself could not really fall in love after a few glances at a pretty girl.”

“Yet the fact remains, my chivalric brother! Even one look may set a heart on fire, and especially that of a self-confident bachelor. Did ever benevolence toward human nature in general make a young fellow desert his office, forsake his clients, dream about beauty, and chase its shadows over the world? You might as well tell me that the unknown knight would have entered the lists against Brian de Bois Gilbert had he

never seen the fair Rowena. I wonder that a young lawyer should have less knowledge of human nature than a girl like myself."

"Edna, I am not yet prepared to make such a confession, whatever you may extort from me hereafter. I admit that I am acting like a lunatic, and giving the lie to all the actions and maxims of my life. But that I should be in love, under such circumstances, is an excess of idiocy I am not ready to concede."

"Frank, I will make a supposition: Had there been three steerage passengers, or three ugly, vulgar women, or three rough men, wronged, not in imagination, but suffering before your eyes, would you have interposed on the spot for their rescue and defense? I fear your benevolence would not have been acutely excited. It is a pair of bright eyes which lure you onward. You are crazy after a beautiful face. At last, Frank, you are in love; yes, in love! The cynic, the bachelor, the philosopher caught without even a word; brought by a glance and a smile to the level of our despised and ridiculed humanity!"

"I am a fair target for your arrows, Edna. Put me up! Shoot at me! Hit me in the eyes! Pierce me through and through with your shafts, but do not try to convict me of love. I am a fool on my own account, but not cupid's fool. That a fellow of my age should be bewitched with a pretty face and form, without exchanging a sentence, and in ignorance of character, culture, history and position, is not probable. It is at war with all that I am and all that I have

been, and a species of boyish madness I should despise in myself."

"But, Frank, look into those wayward thoughts of yours, or rather into that deceitful heart! Do you see oftenest there the venerable English Washington? or even the more matured beauty? Tell the truth! The girl's face, the girl's lips, the girl's blue eyes, the girl's soft smile and graceful form—these, these live in your memory and lead you astray. Be honest! You have dreamed of the others *once*, but you have dreamed of *her* a *dozen* times. I dare say you dreamed of her last night. Ah! your color betrays you. Caught! my cynic, caught."

"Edna, this has gone too far and becomes unendurable, positively disagreeable. If you do not stop, I will leave the room. You have a way of piercing a fellow just where he squirms most."

"Touching him in his tender point, my errant brother! You have made the admission I demanded, by your threat to retire from the scene of action. Only the vanquished leave the field. Now, as victor, I can fulfill my promise and relate my dream. Last night, upon my bed, when my sleep was deep upon me, I thought I saw two beautiful women and an aged man standing on the side of a ship in flames. They were stretching out their hands in a silent agony of despair. Fierce fires were raging all around them. Just as the masts and sails were falling, a boat appeared flying over the ocean to their rescue, impelled by some invisible power, and steered by a person I

had seen before. I beheld three forms leaping from the ship into the waves. The pilot stooped down, took them out of the water and they were saved. There, Frank, my dream is as mysterious and romantic as your own."

"Yet, Edna, you are not in love; you have given an answer to your own arguments; you dream and are not in love. So I have dreamed and may not be in love."

"Resort to syllogisms is a desperate expedient, my wounded knight! I dreamed of three persons, you last night dreamed of one. Oh, I see again the proof of my suspicions in your cheeks."

At this point of their gay and amusing badinage, they chanced to turn and perceived Mrs. Livingstone, who had approached unseen and paused for a proper place to interrupt their conversation.

"I think," she began, "that Frank has made us all crazy as himself. Since he told me his story about the ladies on the *Britannia*, I cannot drive them from my thoughts. Every moment they are intruding themselves, and last night I, usually dreamless, had a most vivid vision."

"You, mamma, you dream"; they exclaimed together.

"Yes, my children," she answered with a smile. "I, even I, who sleep so soundly, was visited during the night by a wild and exciting dream. I seemed to be walking near the top of a mountain. Suddenly it burst into flames like a volcano. On a lofty rock,

surrounded by fire while yet beyond its power, were two women and an old man. I could not discern their features in the distance. They seemed to be in the utmost terror, but their voices could not reach me. I beheld distinctly their frantic gestures. Soon there appeared an opening in the sky, and angels came down and bore them away, while a crowd of demons pursued with the utmost speed and malignity."

"Wonderful! wonderful! most wonderful," said Frank and Edna together.

"Yes, I must confess," continued Mrs. Livingstone, "much as I have always despised superstition, this dream has made a profound impression on me, and I cannot quite laugh at Frank's insane performances. In my opinion, we had better retire to the study and lay the whole subject before your father."

Mrs. Livingstone led the way, followed by her children who could not but admire her matronly beauty and dignity, and thank Heaven for such a union of love and wisdom in one who was the light and joy of the household.

As the group approached, the Judge laid aside his pen, removed his glasses and gave them a smile of welcome. In every respect he was that typical American gentleman we all love to remember for his urbanity, his polish, his courtliness of manner and, above all, sturdiness of integrity, amplitude of view, and practical sense. And more than any other profession, the legal has produced men of the class described.

Frank Livingstone, at the request of his mother,

narrated to the Judge what had occurred in regard to the unknown persons who had so excited his interest. Nor did he forget the dreams and their strange and suggestive similarities. When he had concluded, he said :

“And now, sir, we wish your advice. I do not desire any longer to pursue phantoms, and, knowing your experience and wisdom in the affairs of life, I will be guided wholly by your opinions.”

The judge at first smiled, evidently amused at the adventures of his practical son and the tragic visions of torrents, flames and billows which had so strangely disturbed the other members of his family. Soon, however, his face assumed a graver aspect. He pulled his watch chain. He took up and laid down his glasses. His face had a judicial expression and looked as if he was about to decide an important case on the bench. When the silence was becoming embarrassing, he interrupted it by saying :

“I confess that the facts you relate are remarkable, and not to be passed over without reflection. The dreams are easily explained. No necessity arises for supposing any preternatural interposition. Such expedients are weak and even despicable, and always misleading where the circumstances are explicable on the ordinary principles of our nature. Frank was interested in the ladies, more especially the younger,” he added with a mischievous look and emphasis. “He dreamed of them. He told his mother and sister. They became interested and they also dreamed. This

is all intelligible. But there are other things in the narration about which I wish to inquire."

We should state that Frank Livingstone included in his story many incidental facts which we have not recorded here, but which will be understood as the conversation proceeds.

"First, then," said the Judge, "have you, my son, taken into your confidence any persons but your mother, your sister and Villont, the private detective?"

"Not one person beside these in the world," replied Frank.

"Did Villont," pursued the Judge, "seem willing to undertake the business of finding these unknown persons?"

"I gave the old rascal one hundred dollars and promised him five hundred more, if he succeeded. His little cross eyes sparkled, his yellow wrinkles relaxed, and every spring in his dry French carcass was set in motion by the money he received and the reward he expected. He'll be true to my interests until some greater lunatic promises him a larger sum."

"That is not probable," said the Judge, with a dry laugh, "as he will not perhaps find your equal in insanity, or benevolence. I know him well, and just how far we may trust him. But Villont, beyond question, has taken several subordinates into this service."

"This," Frank answered, "would, of course, be unavoidable."

"And such scoundrels," said the Judge, "are always

looking for a bribe, and either the principal or his agents may have betrayed your secret. You are sure that your telegram came from Villont?"

"This is absolutely certain."

"And you followed the direction and went to Chicago?"

"Yes, in the next train."

"There you received another telegram announcing that the ladies and the gentleman had gone to St. Louis."

"Yes, sir; and when I reached St. Louis, an unknown person gave me another message from Villont saying they had gone to New Orleans. Suspecting something, and not wishing to be fooled farther, I telegraphed to New Orleans and waited in St. Louis until I ascertained that no such persons had arrived in New Orleans. I also stopped at Chicago a day on my return. After careful examination, not a vestige of them could be found there. I then took the first train for this city.

"The most sensible thing you have done throughout the entire transaction," rejoined the Judge, laughing, while the ladies joined in the merriment.

Blushing, Frank said, a little piqued:

"Sir, I do not see that."

"I will very soon show you that I had cause for that remark. Did you see Villont after your return?"

"I did, immediately."

"How did he behave?"

"He seemed confused; evaded my questions; acted

like an old treacherous scoundrel, and abandoned my case."

"That signifies," resumed the Judge, "that he has sold his information to others who are, therefore, proved to be conspiring against these ladies, and who, knowing that you are searching after them, have bribed this Frenchman by his false telegrams to give you a false scent, and throw you off their track. Your mistake was, not to have found Villont and subjected him to a rigid cross-examination before you started. Having begun wrong, you continued wrong through your chase."

"I see it plainly, sir, and confess my error. Your more experienced sagacity will untie this knot and bring some infernal scoundrels to justice—I hope to prison."

"Yet, Frank, while you have certainly made these mistakes, the great fact remains that there is something for us to do. I am glad that you have not been shown to be chasing phantoms like a silly schoolboy in love."

Edna looked at Frank and smiled as she saw him redden into a most guilty confusion.

"Now," resumed the Judge, "you say you have received four different newspapers, announcing that two English ladies, accompanied by a venerable old gentleman, have left this city, and proceeded through Chicago and St. Louis to New Orleans?"

"Yes, sir, I have said so, and I have the papers in my pocket."

“Did you examine the wrappers for the post marks?”

“I regret, sir, to say that I did not think of it.”

“Another mistake, Frank. It would not do to be caught in this way before a jury. I begin to fear that your heart has confused your head, and your benevolence toward mankind has urged you forward too fast.”

Another burst of merriment from the ladies! The Judge shared the amusement when he perceived the embarrassment of his son.

“I will enjoy the joke with you, sir,” said Frank, “since your judicious wisdom is disentangling this skein and conducting us to the truth. Fortunately, I opened the papers in your study, and threw their wrappers into your waste-basket.”

Saying this he stooped, picked up the crumpled envelopes, and examining them carefully, exclaimed:

“They were all mailed in this city, sir.”

“That helps us amazingly,” said the Judge. “I believe the conspirators to be in this city. In this city, too, are the persons we are to seek. Our work is, therefore, in this city, and you will find that Villont holds the clew to the mystery. The rascal has sold your confidence to a higher bidder.”

Light broke upon the mind of Frank Livingstone. So far he had gone forward in the darkness. He had no guide through the maze. Often he was blaming himself as the dupe of his fancies and his dreams. He could not justify his conduct, and yet could not

abandon his course. Henceforward he was to have the sympathy of his mother and sister, and, more than all, aid from the keen sagacity and practical wisdom of his father, so long trained on the Bar and on the Bench in that healthful common sense for which lawyers, above all men, are distinguished. A midnight was dispelled from Frank. His face beamed with joy, hope and encouragement, and through his whole expression and bearing shone that quiet assurance which was the token of victory.

Nor was the Judge himself without relief. He had noticed for months the change in his son, but had thought it wiser not to solicit a confidence which he was sure in the end would be given. When at last it came, he was startled without betraying his surprise. As all the facts of the case came gradually before him, he was glad to know that his son had not been in a senseless chase of the mere shadows of his fancy or dreams from his heart. Mrs. Livingstone and Edna shared the feelings of the Judge, and possibly in them all had mingled something of the family pride. Thus all the members of a household, remarkable alike for sense, culture and calmness, found themselves aroused into a mystery of overpowering interest in three strangers, whose names, even, were not known to them, and who had been casually seen by one of their number on a steamship. More than once in the history of our humanity has Heaven, by such a secret spell and irresistible power, moved to deeds of disinterested charity. Happy are the just

and innocent selected as instruments of blessing in our dark and suffering and guilty world!



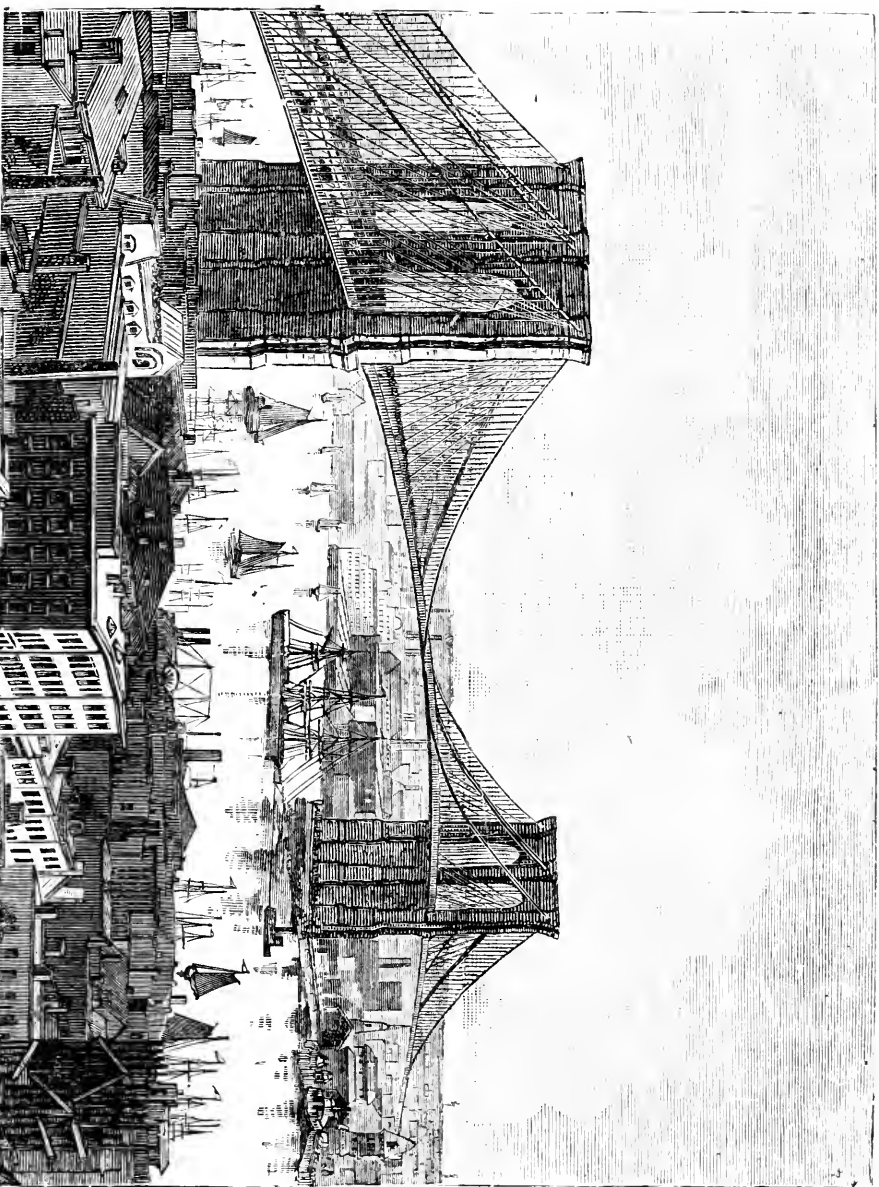
CHAPTER VII.

RAILWAY CONFERENCE.



T was a day of mists and occasional showery rains. The clouds hung low and lowering, and while motionless near the earth, through huge rifts were visible immense black masses driving onward through the lofty air, with a wild and immeasurable fury. The city was saturated. Houses dripped, horses dripped, cars, cabs and omnibuses dripped, umbrellas dripped, men and women and children dripped, and nature herself seemed in one state of universal drip. Then came down on the world that gloom of soul produced by the misty and moistening air in this state of everlasting dripping.

Risk and Planning sat in a dark room of the INTER OCEANIC RAILWAY Depot. They seemed under the influence of the air and sky without them. A shadow was on their faces, indicating discouragement; their hats were drawn over their brows; their voices sank down into low, deep tones, indeed, at times, even into whispers, with occasional pauses between their communications to each other. Everything about them gave token of anxious dejection.



"To rush people through the air, across and around our city."

After a brief interval of silence, Planning burst out into a louder tone.

“Lyman, you see sharp, but you don’t see far.”

“What do you mean, Coolie?” inquired Risk, with manifest displeasure.

“Mean! I mean what I say. Your headlight is bright enough close by, but don’t shine far enough along the track, and I am afraid the INTER OCEANIC will smash up before we know it and carry us down in the wreck.”

“I don’t like this, Coolie,” said Risk, with a rising tempest of indignation. “I don’t like it, and I won’t stand it. You must explain yourself.”

“Well, to be plain, you ought to have told me what took you to Boston. You followed your telegram in the Victoria palace-car like a boy after a butterfly or a soap-bubble, and since these English women came here, under your benevolent escort, everything has gone against us.”

“Planning,” rejoined Risk, pale, quivering and flushing with anger; touched in that sensitiveness to precedence often felt by a superior to a subordinate excelling him in will and intellect. “Planning, this is an insult. I don’t know that the President of the INTER OCEANIC RAILWAY is compelled always to make a confidant of his Vice-President.”

“Don’t be offended, Lyman,” responded Planning, soothingly. “I did not intend to wound you. This is no time for quarrels among us. We are in great peril. I cannot help thinking you made a mistake in

bringing these English women here. Only misfortune came with you in that train."

Lyman Risk was instantly calmed into gentleness by the tones and words of his confederate.

"Oh, Coolie," he exclaimed, "is that all? Tell me, old boy, what we made out of their INTER OCEANIC shares?"

"Two hundred and fifty thousand."

"And what did we realize from their rings, chains, pins, necklaces and trumpery in general—from rubies, topazes, garnets, emeralds, diamonds, and such valueless stones, and then from silver and gold, and stocks high and low, too numerous to mention? Tell me, Coolie, tell me that, and then blame me, if you dare!"

"One hundred and fifty thousand more, I confess," replied Planning, with his usual coolness. "But that don't change my opinion."

"And did you ever notice," inquired Risk, with a sparkle in his black eye, "that whaling diamond on her white fingers? It flashes like a young sun. She told Slykes that her husband got it in the flames of Delhi, and that it was once worn in the crowns of Indian kings. We'll have it, old fellow; we'll have it, and it will make the gains of that Boston pleasure trip mount up to a round half million for the INTER OCEANIC. This money has helped us through the tightest squeeze we ever knew and saved us from certain ruin."

"I don't know that, Lyman. The dollars have disappeared like fishes in a whale's maw, which is just

as hungry as ever, and now we have to meet the danger of the whole thing."

"You seem jealous of me, Coolie, and instead of blaming me, you should thank me for my brains and pluck."

"But I tell you there's danger ahead. My head-light shows me trouble on the track. When the decision of old Justice at Albany is announced, confiscating property for the addition to our Grand Depot, the Livingstones, the Pilkilsons and all the owners will be after us like a pack of wolves, bears, hyenas and tigers. Barks, growls and yells will fill this country. We may yet regret our prices to legislators, lawyers and judges for this confiscation act. The danger was enormous before, and now I fear these women will bring all England down on us. There never was such a tempest gathering over us as at this moment."

"What do you mean, Planning, by all this stuff? I do not understand what you are driving after. You seem to me like a locomotive screaming in a misty night."

"Yes," replied Planning, "screaming, because the bridges are down and the embankments tumbling, and danger everywhere. I repeat what I said at first. You see sharp, but you don't see far. Do you think that the Lord of the Arlington Estate can disappear from the world without inquiry from friends and relatives? Can two beautiful women be lost in America, and no search be made after them? Will

not the Government itself interfere and set in motion all the detective forces at home and abroad? Do you believe you can carry on this system of plunder and not be called to account for it? That would be unnatural and impossible. Even now the Livingstones are after us like bloodhounds, and if we do not get them off our track, will soon be at our heels. Advertisements before long will be blazing in the newspapers, rewards will be offered, and the whole world will be in chase, and, I am afraid, not affectionately, about our throats. You have never thought of this, Lyman Risk."

But he saw it now—saw it with a vision clear as light—saw it in characters of fire staring over him in mocking ruin. Every nerve in him trembled. He seemed ready to drop from his seat and sink through the floor. His eyes had the look and light of blood as he gasped rather than spoke :

"What in the name of Heaven shall we do? It seems to me black as midnight. My dreams this week have been full of horrors."

"Nonsense, Lyman," said Planning, laughing. "Your mercury flies too quick from freezing to boiling point. Brave it out. Don't be a fool. We must meet the danger like men. Fight it out, old fellow, fight it out. Whistle up your courage and say, 'Come on, grave clothes,' as the boy said to the ghost when his knees shook and his teeth chattered."

Risk, under the influence of a superior mind and will, instantly aroused himself. The transformation

was wonderful. Oh, what a subtle mystery is this spell which men weave around each other! A word has changed a coward into a hero. A look has inspired armies and saved empires. A magic tone has moulded human souls, and shaped destinies that are everlasting.

Lyman Risk stood forth another man. You would have supposed him a trained soldier equal to any emergency. Pointing to a package of letters on the table, and drawing up his form to its full and commanding height, he said, with a ringing voice of triumph :

“There, Coolie, there; see those letters; money’s in them; I tell you money’s in them. They’ll bring us all through, as a good engine drives a steamship in spite of wind and wave. The letters; yes; the letters! They’ve cost Lyman Risk many a night’s hard thinking and have been got through many a danger. But he has them. Deliverance is in them for us all, and the INTER OCEANIC RAILWAY into the bargain, Read them! You’ll find Lord Clare’s dead; Mrs. Neville is next heir to the estate, and if Lyman Risk wins her, he’ll be Lord Arlington, and in the British Parliament, if money buys Peers as it buys our virtuous law-tinkers.”

J. Coolie Planning shook his head. His vision was not to be thus confused. Indeed, he read the situation with an almost prophetic glance.

“Worse than ever, Lyman Risk,” he exclaimed, in a most emphatic tone. “The motive now will be a hundred fold stronger to find Lord Arlington and these

ladies ; and public attention will be directed towards them by an increased force. The letters may prove a bomb-shell to explode us all to fragments. Tear them into pieces ; scatter them to the winds ; give them to the flames. Anything and everything to get them out of the world. Even then the peril is great, for that old traitor, Villont, may have taken copies which will blow our fortifications flying through the air."

Risk arose in a demoniacal rage. His eye shot out the fires of frenzy. A white foam was on his lips. He brought his hand down on the table and roared in the fury of his volcanic passion :

"Never, Coolie ; by Heaven, never ! They cost me too much. You shall have my blood first."

In such an earthquake of anger, Planning perceived that it would be vain to reason with his confederate. He realized the enormous risk of the letters, but also knew that the infuriated President was wholly beyond his powers of persuasion. What would he not have given to have converted into smoke and ashes that little pile of destiny ! Those innocent letters ; what is in them ? Money, and honor, and power, and success ; or defeat, disaster, disgrace, perchance a prison-cell, a prison jacket, and a prison gloom, down to a prison grave ! Who can tell ? A spark would destroy the whole peril. One click of a match ; a little burst of flame ; one touch of fire, and then a brilliant blaze of the ignited papers. But Risk's rage was in the way. Passionate folly was stronger than passionless prudence ; not a spark would be applied.

Looking at the letters and then at Risk, Planning said slowly :

"Where will you keep that powder-keg, Lyman? I fear it. Hide it in some place where fire cannot reach it. It will explode yet, I tell you, and blow us into the sky."

Risk replied with a look of intense satisfaction :

"Coolie, don't be frightened! I'll keep this package all right. It is to be in the deepest part of our INTER OCEANIC safe, and no man besides myself and our confidential clerk, John O'Brien, has the keys and the combination."

Planning looked anxious. He saw here more danger and inquired nervously :

"Do you think you should trust John O'Brien with the keys and the combinations? I would trust no man living."

"You find fault," replied Risk, peevishly, "with all I do, and because I do it. O'Brien is true as a steel-rail, and has been in our employ for years."

"It may not do, then," Planning replied, musingly, "to show a lack of confidence by removing him; but bring him down on his knees! Put a pistol to each ear! Swear him by all the saints and angels in his popish calendar! After all, a few dollars may buy him and prove our ruin."

"I'll see to that," said Risk, taking up the package and placing it carefully in the bosom pocket of his coat. "Lyman Risk can attend to his own business and ask no man's advice."

Planning now resumed abruptly, without noticing the fling of his confederate :

“I believe you were all wrong in getting into this trouble. But now, there’s only one way out. It is a bold move, and a coward never wins. You must marry this widow ! That may save us ! It will give you a title to her person if not her estate, and indirectly, wealth and influence to stand around us and protect from the storm like a wall of defense.”

“That’s just what I brought you here to talk about,” said Risk, with manifest pleasure, “when you shot off like a lightning train on another subject. I am in love with the widow and don’t know how to win her.”

At this unexpected communication, Planning laughed until the glass seemed to rattle in the windows.

“Lyman Risk in love ! What will Jane Slag say ? Will Olive Neilson give consent ? The Woman’s Rights will have a word on that question, and the Independent Theatre will be all thunder and lightning. Trouble all round us, Lyman ! But go on ; it is our only chance ! In love ! an old roué like you in love ! Tell it to the wild cats, Lyman ; if they don’t believe it, tell it to a lunatic asylum.”

“You may laugh as you please, Coolie ; but it is nevertheless a fact. Even while necessity drives me to spoil this woman, I adore her as if she were a goddess, and rob her with the resolution, by my marriage, to repair her losses and spend my life in making her happy. The greatest pleasure I ever knew is to be

near her and to look into her face. But I have not learned how to gain her and feel baffled and confused at every approach. I want your advice, and, indeed, for this appointed our interview.

"Well, my friend," said Planning thoughtfully, "talk little and act kindly."

"But explain to me why you give such strange advice," Risk answered, with a look of bewildering uncertainty.

"As our interests are so vast and so united, I will be entirely frank. Between educated and uneducated minds is a chasm nearly impassable. Something in tone and manner indicates the mysterious and indefinable difference. Now, Risk, I must be plain with you. Your talk sometimes betrays you. These women are from the highest circles of English refinement, and will notice in you ways and words hidden from yourself. Remember, too, the enormous descent from station and wealth to poverty and dependence, and the suspicions she will sometimes inevitably entertain. Your difficulties are stupendous, but not insuperable. Be attentive to the old Earl; please the girl by every delicate kindness; talk with the widow seldom and in the softest tones; let your presents be few, but thoughtful and costly; possibly, in the end, you may allay her prejudices, and, when you have brought her down to the last extremity, she may consent to be your wife."

CHAPTER VIII.

LORD ARLINGTON'S DEATH.



VEN before the conversation just related, Risk had instinctively shaped his course toward Mrs. Neville according to this shrewd advice of Planning. During her removal to her new dwelling in a more obscure street, and among coarse and vulgar people, he had been constant in his attentions. He had shown great tact and delicacy, not only in his assistances, but also in many soothing and gentle sympathies. Indeed, there was in his nature much latent benevolence, and had education and religion controlled his passions, he would have been a noble man. He had also been tender and judicious in his manner toward Lucy, and invaluable in superintending the transfer of the helpless Earl of Arlington to his apartment in the new abode. In a thousand nice and acceptable ways he had promoted the comfort of the household, paying many bills and persistently refusing the money when offered. Thus insensibly he had wound himself into the confidence of the family, and made himself useful, and almost indispensable. It was not strange, therefore,

that he should be seen by them, softened in the light with which he was invested by so many acts of sympathetic kindness. The heart often creates the medium through which the head sees facts and forms conclusions, as the earth from her bosom gives forth the mists which envelop her in the golden glory of the morning. Yet, such are the contrarieties of our nature, that this very man, who was strewing a pathway of sorrow with so many flowers, was at the same time planting along it sharp thorns to lacerate, most cruelly, pure and trusting hearts.

Risk had suggested the employment of Midgetto, who, while hastening the dark ruin, had been also a ray of light in the household. He was, indeed, an almost speechless little beauty. While diminutive in size, his form was exquisitely moulded, his features delicately Roman, and his immense liquid black eyes shone over a complexion where the bloom of the rose mingled with the brown of the olive. You could scarcely help thinking of him as a wingless angel from the canvas of Raphael. In America, he was an evident exotic. He should be in Rome, and under an Italian sky. Midge, as he was now familiarly called, under the terrible discipline of Villont, had been educated into silence, control and submission. A word scarcely ever escaped from his lips. He was a beautiful pantomime of grace and sympathy. In his person he had inherited all the charms of his aristocratic Italian mother, unmingled with a single trace from the deformed and repulsive Villont. Moreover, the

genius of his maternal blood had bloomed out into artistic tastes. He loved to sketch with pen and pencil, and reveled in form and color. Both Mrs. Neville and Lucy had spent many hours of quiet joy in giving him instruction, and he showed all the creative instincts of the artist. Everything lovely in him was thus nurtured, and he grew daily in beauty and intelligence. While the unconscious and innocent boy was conveying the letters of the family to the den of Villont, he as little knew the ruin he was working as coral insects, building from their branching whiteness a tropical island in the deep ocean, are aware of the tempests and the billows far above their own peaceful domain.

The affairs of the new dwelling in a few days moved forward with entire regularity. But life's demands are inexorable. Our perishable flesh must be fed or die. The household of the Nevilles resembled an island crumbling incessantly before the hoarse and hungry waves. The bills were increasing, and the deposit in the bank was diminishing. Addition and subtraction were united in the ruin. The rattle of a grocer's cart, suggesting expense, shook the nerves of Mrs. Neville, and an account from shop or store made her shiver with a chill of approaching destitution. An enormous expenditure was necessary for the Earl alone, who required the care of a nurse and the skill of a physician.

O Poverty, how fearful thy face! How cold thy remorseless eye! How pitiless thy look! Thy breast

is brass, and thy heart is iron, and around thy gaunt form is the iceberg's winter! More than death, thou art the dread of our humanity! Not only dost thou blight bodies to the grave, but wither hearts, kill hopes, blast love, dwarf genius, darken homes and brutalize millions, casting thy shadow over this world, and beyond it the mystery of an everlasting darkness.

Before thy spell, these fair women and this frail old man were suffering agonies unutterable. A trial peculiarly sharp was creeping like a shadow towards Mrs. Neville. Day by day she marked its dark approach. She was moving steadily toward the inexorable time when poverty would tear from her finger the diamond placed there by the affection of her Oscar, and the sparkle of whose light of love was to vanish from her eye, most probably, forever.

The day, the hour, the moment came! Often she rivetted on the brilliant a glassy stare. Sometimes her eyes darted flames. Again, she had a dreamy and distracted look, followed by tears. Her bosom would swell and palpitate with its agony. Oh, how the image of her Oscar rose before her soul! She saw him as he brought to her the splendid gem, told her its thrilling history, expressed to her his love and admiration, then bent his knees and placed it on her finger, kissed her and embraced her, and thrilled her with that exquisite joy which only the tenderness of affection can excite in a human bosom. She could almost feel again the warm imprint of his lips, and hear the tones of his manly voice.

Shall she herself remove her Oscar's gift from her finger? Shall she sell the token to strangers? Shall she prostitute this most sacred emblem of a mutual love? Shall she devote it to meet life's lowest wants? Shall it pass to vulgar hands, be seen by vulgar eyes, possibly sparkle on some vulgar brow? Shall it be divested of every tender association, and be henceforth in memory a thing hideous and loathsome, and to be torn, if possible, out from the history of her life? Again and again she pulled it to the tip of her finger. As often she thrust it back with impetuous violence. The task seemed impossible. Once she fell prostrate on the floor and remained insensible for hours. Her heart was breaking. The removal of her ring involved in it the agony of a farewell to the rank and wealth and brightness of her beautiful past.

But the needs of her condition were too strong for Mrs. Neville. The gleams of her diamond could not feed the flame of her life. The magnificent jewel is at last removed. Not a gem is left on her hand. Every vision of joy has grown dark in her soul.

She sent the priceless ring in a note by Midge to Risk.

Even in his breast it awoke a pang. He longed to restore it to its place. But with him the necessities were as cold and as dark and as terrible as with her. Dollars alone could keep from staring ruin the voracious INTER OCEANIC monster. Risk regrets, but he will have to sell. He, too, may postpone the evil day. It will come, unless a worse arrives first to stop

his hand. He deposits the jewel in his safe, pretends its sale, and places a few paltry thousands to the credit of Mrs. Emily Neville, representing on the books of an American bank her whole earthly hope in a land of strangers, where villains are plotting her destruction.

After these exhausting struggles, Mrs. Neville was lying on her bed in comparative calmness. The agony was over, and nature demanded relief. Her father was below in his usual place. After the fearful and unexpected death of Colonel Neville, the Earl on the vessel had been partially paralyzed. His motionless limbs ceased to be under the control of his will, and, indeed, volition itself was suspended. Since that time his eyes had not been once opened, and had it not been for his low breathing, the slight heaving of his chest, and an occasional twitching of his lip and cheek, he might have been considered a statue, or a corpse. In this condition he had been conveyed from the vessel, and then in the car, and thence to the former dwelling, and afterwards to the present home.

What a spectacle of ruin! The strong man living while dead. Those active, powerful limbs weaker than infancy. That mighty and manly frame, one breathing mass of impotence. In the eye no flash, and in the face no fire. Only a lingering glory around the expansive and venerable brow. And the soul—the poor, wandering, uncertain soul, in its dubious intelligence and fearful imbecility! The pride of our humanity brought lower than by the grave.

While in a light slumber, Mrs. Neville thought she heard a voice. Is it a dream? Her name is repeated. She hears, although not fully awake, again and again—"Emily, Emily, Emily!" Now, the tone grows louder: "Emily!" There can be no room for doubt. She springs from her bed in terror and amazement. It is the voice of her father, clear and strong as it ever rang through the halls and across the piazzas and over the lawns of Arlington Castle. She was stunned and staggered by what seemed a summons from the grave. A resurrection of the Earl from his sepulchre could not have more surprised and startled her. She flew down the stairs and to his room. There he sat in all the strength and majesty of his grandest day. He had thrown a splendid Afghan, almost the only memento from the castle, around his shoulders. His face indicated perfect composure, and all the faculties of his mind and his body were, for the moment, restored. Mrs. Neville rushed toward him, and flung herself frantically on his breast, pouring forth an agony of tears. The fountains of a human soul were broken up, and those streaming floods subdued the volcanic fires which would have hardened it forever into the granite of despair. She wept and wept and wept, and found relief on the breast of a father whose dying lips kissed away her tears. No infant on the bosom of a mother ever experienced a more soothing comfort. "Emily," began the Earl, in a low tone of intense paternal affection, "Heaven, for a few moments, has restored my strength

that I may support you in your suffering, and give you the sympathy of a father."

"Oh, papa, papa," she burst forth in her overflowing anguish, "my heart is breaking, breaking, breaking."

"I know the cause," said the Earl. "No time need be spent in explanations. While lying here with closed eyes and seemingly insensible, my mind has been always on the wing. I have heard your conversations, and become acquainted with the trials of your situation. I comprehend your sorrows from my own."

"Oh, can this be true?" she cried out with increased emotion. "Oh, that I could have known it! I might have then poured my griefs into your ear."

"No," replied the Earl, "this could not have been. I could have made no response, and would have been oppressed with the feeling of my imbecility. My peace would have been disturbed, and my bright visions clouded. This is the hour for an interview predestined by Heaven."

"Why, oh, why," exclaimed Mrs. Neville, "have we been afflicted by the vengeance of some remorseless power who sports with our sufferings!"

"Hush, hush, my daughter," said the Earl, tenderly and solemnly, but reprovingly. "All is ordered in eternal light and love, and in a way far above our poor earthly wisdom. Was I an arrogant man, Emily?"

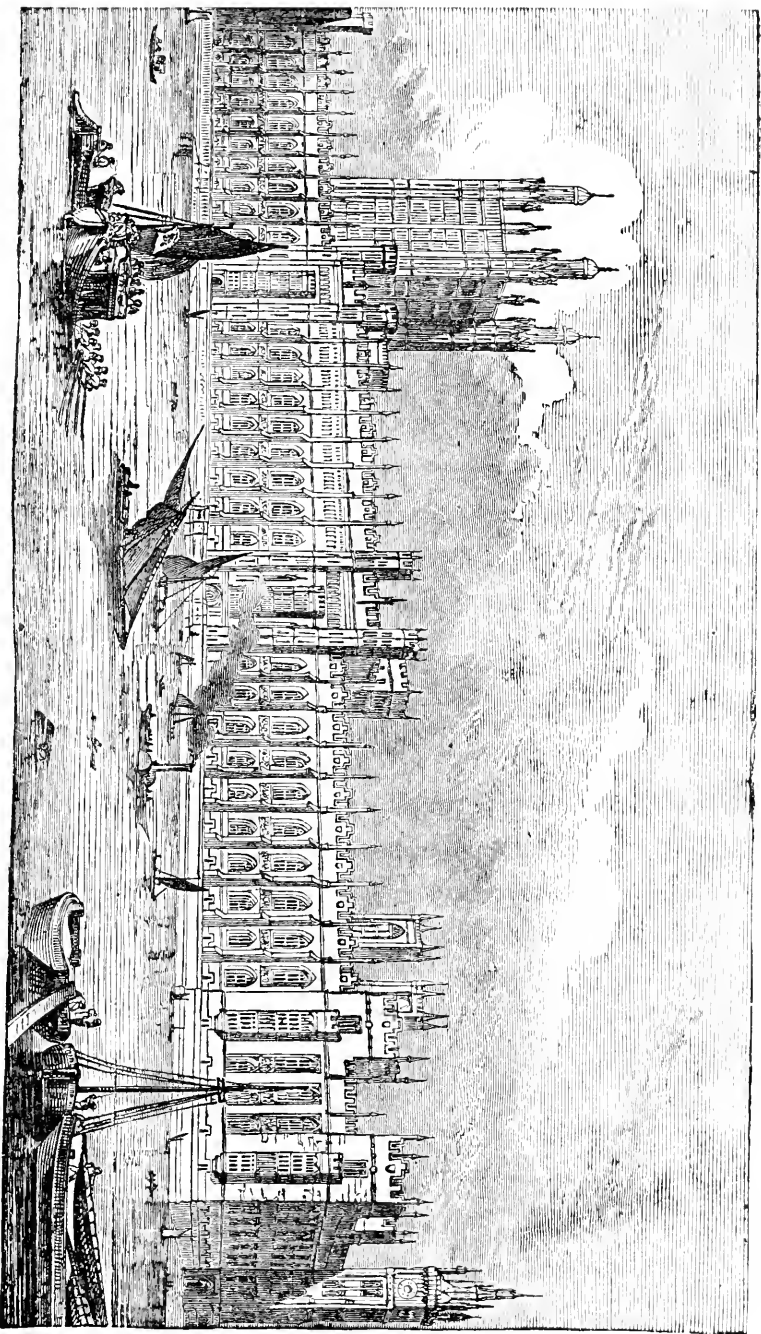
Mrs. Neville was astonished at such a question from

a father who had in his family been signally esteemed for his modesty, his urbanity and his benevolence.

"Oh, no, no, papa," she responded impetuously. "How could you ask such a question?"

"Because," he said, "I have seen myself in a new light. On this bed I have read the secrets of my soul. Was I not the Earl of Arlington; the descendant of Saxon and Norman nobles; the lord of a vast estate; a leader in Parliament; a counsellor of sovereigns; starred and gartered and ribbanded with honors? Unconsciously and insensibly, in such a state, man feels he is not a common mortal. Here I have learned that I, too, am dust. Yes! I am only the brother-worm of millions. I have been reduced to the level of my humanity, and now, before men and before God, I esteem myself as I am—a mortal in his own proper personality. All the paltry distinctions of life seem as nothing compared with its eternal interests and relations. The silent lesson has been terrible. But it has been learned. The bitterness is over, and the cup exhausted. I now live only to strengthen you for a similar experience."

"Oh, my father," she cried, "I, too, have been passing down, down, down, amid the thorns and rocks of this dreadful abyss of our humanity. Nor have I, as you, yet reached its depths. Rank, wealth, beauty, fashion, leisure, servants, luxuries, all that gave charm and grace to my life, went down with my Oscar into the ocean, and I am left in this new and strange land to feel that I am alone and myself. I am surrounded



"A leader in Parliament."
Page 134.

by all that is hard, uncouth, vulgar and repulsive, and possibly by fraud and villainy. Yet I believe that I will emerge from the midnight of this deep with gifts better than station can bestow."

Mrs. Neville grasped again the hand of her father, and fell over him as in a spasm of agony.

"Go forward," resumed the Earl, imprinting a long kiss on her forehead. "Go forward, my daughter, in the path of trial you are still to tread. Only such suffering can melt the ice of your soul, and bring you into sympathy with our humanity, and fit you for your future work in the world."

"I see it all," she cried; "all, all, and I accept it all."

A halo now seemed encircling the brow of the Earl. His face shone in the light of more than a terrestrial glory. The very room was illuminated. His voice resembled the music of heaven, as he said:

"I have not only seen the vanity of earth, but also the celestial brightness. The veil has been lifted. On the throne of the universe I beheld the form of the Ineffable. Around His human person was the glory of His Divinity. Cherubim and Seraphim were there with innumerable men in angelic shapes. Oh, the light, the song, the beauty, the everlasting beatitude! I faint, I fail; my work is almost over."

"Oh, father!" exclaimed Mrs. Neville, reflecting his countenance in her own, "I feel a tranquillity unknown before. Help will come in my last extremity, and I will conquer."

"The false glitter shall be taken out of thy life, my daughter," whispered the Earl feebly, "and the everlasting gold shall be thy inheritance. Call my Lucy."

She was near. Lucy, too, had heard the voice of her grandfather, but, finding her mother already conversing at his side, stood in the passage listening to all that had been said. She now flung herself on his breast and found comfort in her tears. How beautiful the spectacle of this fair girl, weeping on the heart of the old dying Earl! Summoning his last remaining strength, while his face was irradiated with the celestial light, he said to her:

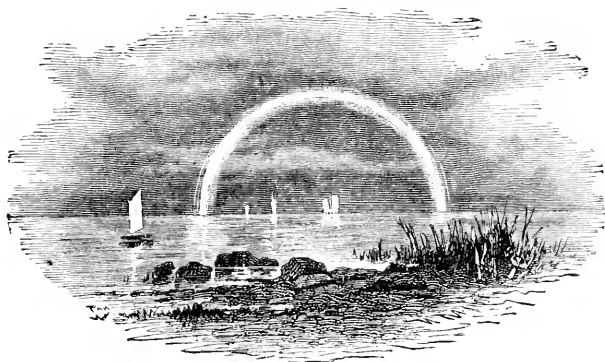
"My power is almost gone. It was given me for your mother and yourself. Remember what you have already heard. Your trials will soon be over and bring you good in the end. My only advice is: *Trust your Saviour and marry your deliverer!*"

The Earl's life was nearly over. One more burst of the flame and its light on earth is out forever! Raising himself with an inexpressible majesty, he said, with a dignity august and almost superhuman:

"It would not be fit that I should be buried in a strange land. An Earl of Arlington should sleep in the soil of England. Embalm my body and carry me to my dear native country. Farewell! I leave you for Paradise!"

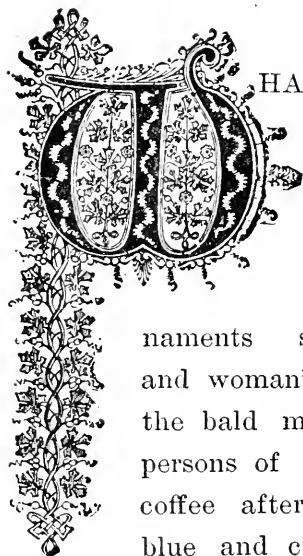
As he spoke, his eyes closed and he fell back on his bed. His noble features were illuminated by a ray from the glory of the setting sun, which turned to

gold his venerable hair, seemed on his forehead a saintly halo, and transfigured his countenance into a celestial beauty.



CHAPTER IX.

JUDGE LIVINGSTONE'S STUDY.



HAT more comfortable than a warm bright study in a chill November evening! Cheerful lights; a sparkling fire; rows of companionable books, lounge, desk, afghan, and all the little ornaments suggesting that woman's taste and woman's love have been there to relieve the bald monotonous masculinity! Add the persons of the ladies sitting at the hour of coffee after dinner with needles, and the blue and crimson and gold of embroidery, and the tone of affection, and the smiles from satisfied hearts, and the face of beauty, while gentle smoke curls upward and hangs in almost a conscious canopy over the scene, and gentlemen in caps and gowns and slippers, and all the allowable privileges of their own domain, puff so leisurely and enjoyingly, and the story, and the song, and the repartee, and the merry laugh, give token that the aroma of domestic life is in that literary centre of the dwelling toward which all gravitate with such a magnetic influence.

Take a vote as to what is the most attractive



“What more comfortable than a warm bright study in a chill November evening.” Page 142.

room in the house, and the white balls will say—STUDY. So thought the Livingstones, father and mother and son and daughter, as they realized in its ideal the picture I have described.

“Well, Frank,” began the Judge, “you have fought dragons, and windmills, and had adventures enough by land and by sea to satisfy any ordinary errant in his chase after beauty. Yet you seem far as ever from the rescue. I suppose you now feel like taking off your armor, hanging up your sword, helm and votive shield, and abandoning the chivalric pursuit for the business of your office and the society of your clients.”

“Sir, you may laugh at me, and I deserve it,” said Frank, with a tone and air of determination; “but the further I go the more I am resolved. I must move forward. Having advanced thus far, I must proceed to success, or lose all I have accomplished. Besides, he who stops short of his purpose, not only misses his object, but injures his character. More than ever, ‘CONQUER’ is my motto.”

“I am glad to hear this, my son, and commend your persistence. You will find in our city and over our country the wrecks of old and wealthy families, who have lost everything through sensitiveness, indolence and irresolution, while the bold and the bad have mounted on their ruins to fortune. In this republic, if not everywhere, manhood must stand on itself, and not on the accidents of birth and estate. Primogeniture here should be no guard to wealth, and

only those who acquire by activity should long hold fortunes in their grasp.

"Your courage is a pledge that we may yet found in our Republic an order of merit, which will supplant or overshadow our mere monied snobbery. But I must not be carried away by my favorite topic. We will address ourselves to business. While the ladies work and listen we will discuss the situation. And first, what about Villont?"

"All you suggested, sir, has so far proved true. Our detectives have reported that Slykes often inquires at his up town office, and has been seen at least once in his down town room."

"Ha!" said the Judge, looking up with a gleam of hope and intelligence, "that is an important fact and may lead to results. Proceed!"

"I have also ascertained that a small boy, supposed to be Midge, Villont's reputed son, has repeatedly brought to the post-office letters for England, and taken away letters from England. The delivery clerk, however, is not perfectly certain of the person of the lad, and could not give satisfactory proof in court."

"Still," responded the Judge, musingly but encouragingly, "small straws become sure signs when they all blow in the same direction. I have the dawn of a theory which will soon be clear of mists. Everything yet known points forward to the same persons—dimly yet harmonizingly. Did you ask for the lists of the English letters for the last few months?"

"I have, sir, and, with the utmost care, I have

found that they included the name of EDWARD ARLINGTON, and the clerk also has a confused recollection that his was the address for which the little boy inquired. I forgot to say that the boy looked like an Italian, which answers to Midge."

The Judge had visibly started while his son spoke. He placed his hand on the side of his forehead in deep thought. A sudden light broke over his face, as if some buried memory had been evoked from its darkness. At last he inquired eagerly:

"Have you the old book containing the names of the INTER OCEANIC stockholders used in our suits against the corporation?"

"Yes, sir; I kept it as a memento of your legal life you might value on the bench and after your retirement. I placed it myself on the top shelf in the northern corner of your library. There it is now! I can tell it by its large size and great gilded letters."

Frank instantly seized the library steps, mounted them, reached toward the volume, grasped it, blew away the dust, leaped down, and, placing it on the table, turned to a page near the beginning, and, hastily glancing his eye over the lists, exclaimed:

"Here, here is something of importance! You have directed me to another link in this chain of testimony. I find the name of Lord Arlington, and opposite, five thousand shares for the benefit of Mrs. Emily Neville."

"I have it," said the judge quickly; "at least. I think I have it all. But I must not be as eager as

you were in your Chicago chase. An old lawyer never runs where he ought to walk. Edward, as I now remember, is the christened name of Lord Arlington. I have heard of his majestic appearance and resemblance to Washington, and also of the beauty of his daughter and granddaughter, and of the splendid face and form of his son-in-law, Colonel Oscar Neville. It is flashing through me like sunlight that this is the party you saw on the Britannia. Most probably the Earl is traveling under his real name—Edward Arlington—and that the correspondence of the party is under that name. Moreover, I suspect that these INTER OCEANIC rascals have discovered these facts, and sought the plunder of their rich English stockholders. It was Colonel Neville who was hurled into the ocean, and his death and the Earl's age have facilitated their infamous scheme. I will not affirm that my theory is yet proved by the facts, but I believe that it will yet be proved by the facts."

Frank burst forth with a cry of joyful relief. The evidence was not indeed sufficient to establish the supposition. It was, however, a solution of almost every difficulty of the dark problem, and seemed to pour around him a clear and fresh light. He said:

"I have sometimes had a glimmer of this truth, but it has been reserved for your wisdom to discover and suggest it. This, I feel, is the clew to this mystery."

"Do not be too rapid," replied the cautious Judge. "Remember Chicago and St. Louis! To the legal

certainly of the result is yet a long journey. Villont is at present the key to the situation. The old villain knows everything."

While this conversation was progressing, the ladies listened with the most eager interest. You could measure the intensity of their minds by the speed of their flying fingers, as their needles glanced and glittered in the light, and the beautiful flowers grew in size and color under each magic feminine touch. Occasionally they exchanged glances, and whispered words, diffusing over the serenity of the legal scrutiny the sweet light of the affections. After a few minutes of silence Frank resumed:

"In one particular, I fear that I have gone too fast and too far. I hate the meanness of the spy, and yet my anxiety may have betrayed me into what I have despised from my youth. Suspecting Villont and Slykes, I employed an old client of ours, now on the police force, to hire an apartment next to the French scoundrel, to pierce his wall and watch his movements. When I receive a telegram I am to proceed to the place myself."

"Excellent," said the Judge, "by all means! Were your end unworthy, the act would be contemptible. You are only employing an officer of the law to do the work of the law in unearthing villains. I commend your foresight, and believe it will promote our success."

While the Judge spoke, a servant entered with a telegram for Frank. Opening and reading it hastily, he exclaimed:

"Here is my summons. I have been expecting it and must leave instantly. Excuse me; I will report soon."

He passed into the hall, snatched his cap and overcoat, and threw himself into a waiting vehicle. The cab flew down the streets, the horse striking sparks from the stones, and was driven furiously until within three blocks of Villont's dwelling, where Frank emerged, and, walking cautiously along under the shadows of the houses, soon arrived where Villont lived and plotted. He found the officer at his post, watching through the hole. He himself applied his eye. The spectacle was not soon to be forgotten.

The room was a carpetless den, dim with dust, and festooned with cobwebs. A single lamp gave a ghastly light. The day in that sombre place seldom heard the buzz of the companionable fly, and the night was a stranger to the chirp of the cheerful and domestic cricket. There the spider had his congenial haunt, and, like the owner, wove for himself his webs of plunder and death. Had entrance been possible, you would have found there the evening bat and the solitary owl, while the wolf, the lynx and the hyena would have been fitter guardians than the faithful and affectionate dog.

All around the apartment were recesses of iron like huge pigeon-holes, in which were placed boxes of iron within boxes of iron, and these protected by bolts of iron. Iron, iron, iron everywhere to guard the miser's gold. Each interior box held the treasure, which was in bright American eagles. From twilight to midnight,

the hoarded sums were counted with gloating eye and eager finger by Villont. This was the recreation of his strange life. Into the empty boxes he dropped the earnings of the day, and counted the full boxes until the midnight stroke of twelve summoned to his wretched bed. For him this was intenser joy than was afforded to others by club, or theatre, or opera, or lecture, or all the glitter and luxury, and companionship so attractive to our humanity.

Villont had secured his den by other defences besides bolts and bars. Let the robber enter; a touch, a click, and the miser's secret exploding machines will have blown the intruder to fragments. See how cautiously he moves about his own apartment! He fears his own weapons of protection. A spring carelessly touched may kill him among his treasures.

Villont sat in the midst of his den. On a small table was a package of copied letters. Gold could scarcely have given him greater satisfaction. He looked at them, tapped them, took them fondlingly, and said in tones of hate and with a look of grim joy:

"Sleekes, Sammie,—Sammie Sleekes! Villont's day is coming! He'll pay your impudence in von prison-jacket, in de nice locksteps, in von leetle pleasant black cell. Dese letters be your von big ruin: your huge destruction. Sammie deveel Sleekes, von dynamite to blow into leetle beets your Sat-tan's Railway!"

The wretch arose, and danced around his treasure with the antic glee of a Satyr anticipating his fresh feast of blood.

There was a slight sound without the door. Villont started, and, seizing the package, thrust it into the pocket of his gown. Slykes entered. By some mystery of neglectfulness the door had been left ajar. An enemy was there to take advantage of the oversight. Slykes was always on the watch, and, with the genius of a juggler, improved his opportunities. Putting his hands into his pockets, drawing up his small person, and speaking in his shrillest twang, he said, with elevated brows and cool impudence:

“Good evenin’, money chest! Among them American eagles, sure as a spider among dead flies! Piles of gold in your den, my old dollar snatcher.”

Villont stared at his tormentor with the leer and grin of a horrible hate. Had he dared, he would have struck him dead.

“Dis von appartemon be mine, sare! Veel you please leave it, sare?”

“Not a bit of it, old wrinkles; not a bit of it! as we say when a biler busts and we can’t find the pieces. No! my man-screw; Sam Slykes is here for business—will leave when he gets what he comes for.”

“Vat’s dat you come for, sare! Tell me dat and begone!”

“Come for,” said Slykes, with a survey of the most provoking coolness; “come for! Something you’ll stick to like a forty-ton locomotive to a new, straight track! Something you like better than a money-box, or your own benevolent heart, or even your friend and benefactor, Sam Slykes.”

"Well, sare, vat dat ting is you deseere? Tell me now and I will give it, if posseebel, and see you never here once again!

"See them letter-copies sticking out of the pocket of your gown, like sleepin' car-pillows airin' at the windows! I want them," screamed Slykes, "and I'll have them. I'll stick to you like boiler-crust, my venerable boy! Shut your door! Sam Slykes will open it! Draw your bolt! Sam Slykes will pull it back! Hide in a money-box! Sam Slykes will drag you out and your eagles with you! Touch that key and Sam Slykes will teach you that a bullet flies quicker than rusty iron!"

Noticing Villont moving to snatch a huge key on the table as a weapon for attack, Slykes quickly drew and cocked his revolver, and pointed it at his enraged but defenceless victim, who screamed out in his despair:

"Now, sare, at once let me know your leetle beesness, and I'll obleege you if in my abilitie."

"Out, then, with the copies of those English letters—out with them now, my gold-bag; out with them from the pocket of that gown; out with them, old true soul, or Sam Slykes will hang your head above your heels, invite the crows to your flesh, make one-half your eagles fly into Uncle Sam's pocket, and the other half come screamin' for joy into the pocket of Sam Slykes, as sure as steam whizzes through an open throttle-valve."

Villont saw that there was to be no end to this. While Slykes lived he was to be a victim—a miserable slave down to a miserable grave. His rage was that

of a demon in despair. Seizing quickly the key he flung it at his foe, and, missing him, closed in a last fatal struggle. By a sudden nervous and powerful effort Slykes hurled him on the opposite side of the room. A flash, a report; the head of Villont is exploded into pieces. He had fallen on one of his own secret springs. Smoke filled the apartment. The blood and the brains were scattered round on his own money-chests, and there he lay, a poor, mangled, ghastly, frightful human ruin! Slykes rushed through the door, taking the precaution to close it, and fled down the stairs, and along the street in an agony fierce as that with which he had ever shaken his mutilated victim—an agony, not of remorse, but of terror.

Frank Livingstone stood for a moment aghast. Recovering himself, he and the officer proceeded to the fatal spot. The door was forced open, and they entered. A thick smoke, the red glare of the lamp, and the torn and bloody head of Villont made a sickening spectacle. But the claims of duty were first. The officer took possession of the body, and removing the letters from the pocket of Villont, gave them to Livingstone, who thus had what Slykes so eagerly coveted, and so brutally demanded. He at once returned to his waiting cab, and was driven rapidly home. Under other circumstances he would have entered the house with the joy of triumph, and collected the family, and held aloft his prize, and made the hour memorable by the exultations of his victory. But he passed into the study awed and solemnized

by what he had seen and heard. In a few brief words, he narrated to his father what had happened and placed before him on the table the package of the copied letters.

There it was at last. They saw it; they touched it; they opened it; they read its contents. Yes! there it was! Time, money, toil, peril, had been required to secure it. But there it was! A clew to the mystery! A proof of all they had feared and suspected!

All was now revealed. The letters were examined so far as circumstances made it necessary, collected and arranged according to their dates. Evidently they were exact letterpress copies. The earliest, so far as they permitted themselves to peruse, they discovered to be mere letters of news and of affection. Expressions of surprise on both sides succeeded at the long mutual silence. Astonishment and bewilderment grew as time advanced. Then came requests for money and remittances of money.

Finally there was disappointment, and that despair of results which had evidently closed the painful correspondence.

After sufficiently mastering and noting the contents of the package, Frank raised his head and said to his father.

"I suppose, sir, that we are now ready to arrest Risk, Planning and Slykes."

"I am not certain of that," replied the prudent Judge.

"You surprise me," said his son; "it seems to me that the proofs are complete, and that we incur risks by delay."

"I will give you my reasons," answered the Judge, after some minutes of deep reflection. "My first objection might have been expected from you. Our time should be occupied in discovering and relieving the ladies. When they are found, the case will be far more complete. It has now assumed a national importance. We are about to enter into a struggle with a vast corporation, which will fight with all the energy of despair. Remember, too, that these are mere copies, and that Villont is not here to connect them with the officers of the Railway. Should Midge be recovered, he is too young to have much influence with a jury. You must use all your energies to recover the originals, which, doubtless, are in the safe at the rooms of the INTER OCEANIC Depot. We are now masters of the situation, and can afford to wait and work. Our complete success seems certain."

Frank was convinced by his father's reasons. At the bottom of the package was a paper which, not being a letter, had not yet been examined. It proved to be the last will and testament of Villont, bequeathing his entire property to his son Midgetto, who, at his majority, would thus have an estate worth one hundred thousand dollars.

CHAPTER X.

SAM SLYKES' COURTSHIP.



ITTING by her mother's side, in their plain little parlor, Lucy Neville said, "I wish to speak to you on a subject painful to us both."

"Do not hesitate, my daughter. Tell me all that is in your mind and heart. We must have no reserves between us in our present trying circumstances. I have been so busy with your grandpapa, and so unhappy and perplexed that I have not been able to converse with you as much as I desired."

"I never told," said Lucy, "how much I suffered when your jewels were sold, and, above all, our beautiful dresses, and when I put on what I am now wearing."

"You did not, my dear; nor was it necessary. I understand my Lucy's sufferings by the keen intensity of my own."

"Oh, mamma, I thought my life was going out of me, and that I was bidding adieu to all that was lovely forever. In my present clothing, and in this ugly place, and amid these people, I no more feel like

Lucy Neville ; and yet," she added, with a look of strength and lofty determination, "*I am* Lucy Neville, and I *will* be Lucy Neville. But it is dreadful, dreadful, dreadful !"

"My Lucy, only those who have been in such a furnace can realize how fierce and terrible the flames. They scorch through the flesh into the very soul. Take from our kings and nobles the tokens of their birth, their titles, their estates and all the outward splendors of their rank and power, and they little know how soon in their feelings they would be reduced to the level of our ordinary humanity. Only those who go down from the brilliance above into the darkening abyss can know the agonies of the passage. When we remember their changeful histories, monarchs, as a class, will not be envied. How many palaces of Europe are the monuments of their sorrows ! Alas ! I fear, more will be !"

"At first," resumed Lucy, "I thought my Arlington and Neville blood would be superior to everything. My spirit seemed a flame of fire, and I did not let you see how it blazed within me. My resolution was fixed never to be vulgarized. However, I soon found that vulgar people and vulgar associations were producing their effect, and that I must sink down to the vulgar level around me. Do you know what stopped me in my descent, mamma ?"

"Tell me your secret, my daughter ; for, alas ! I, who should be your guide and your help, feel myself surely plunging down into the hateful, hateful chasm."

“Well, mamma, I found aid where I did not expect it. There was something in the dying words and majestic look of dear grandpapa that seemed to inspire and transform me. Light shone around me as from another world, and the splendors from his face illuminated my very dreams. I feel in me now a strength that can conquer everything, and, like an eagle, soar above the cloud and tempest.”

“Oh, my daughter!” exclaimed Mrs. Neville, “that I had your simple and beautiful trust! I feel sinking, sinking; still and ever sinking. My Arlington spirit has not been equal to the battle. I thought my family pride invincible. Alas! alas! I am like a broken ship, drifting before wind and wave. Yet! oh yet, at the last, I shall be recovered, and resemble the strong vessel, under steam and sail, dashing aside the billows, and defying the storms while rushing gallantly onward to her harbor.”

Mrs. Neville sank back on the sofa and relieved herself by tears. When her paroxysm had subsided, Lucy resumed:

“In your present distress, mamma, I hesitate to speak to you, and yet there is something pressing heavily on my mind. May I venture my advice?”

“Certainly, Lucy, certainly. Our present circumstances demand mutual confidences. Speak fully and freely.”

“I feel strongly, dear mamma, that we should break away from all future associations with Mr. Risk, Planning, and that odious Slykes. While we were such

strangers, and grandpapa was so ill and helpless, it seemed necessary, but now we ought to take care of ourselves, and as that is the right thing we will be sustained in doing it."

The noble girl, as she spoke, unclasped her arms from the neck of her mother, and stood before her the impersonation of all that is lovely in young female beauty. She seemed radiant as she uttered her plea. There was something grander than the Arlington in her. It was a ray from the glory of the celestial light illuminating her womanhood.

"How can we work?" replied Mrs. Neville, plaintively, and with an expression of disgust. "I cannot do it, and you cannot do it. We do not know how. It is absurd. Oh, I seem abandoned by earth and by Heaven! Although we have so many friends abroad, here we may be a prey to enemies. My heart is becoming iron; I weep, but my tears are as drops of hail; I pray, but my words vanish into air; I look upward, but soon turn my face downward to the darkness of inevitable despair."

"O, mamma, do not yield thus," cried Lucy, with an heroic energy. "I cannot sink my spirit. Something in me is immortal and unconquerable. I am determined to act for myself, and break away from these men whom I sometimes fear to be bad and treacherous, and the real cause of our ruin; I shrink from them; yes, shrink from them as I could not from honest vulgarity."

"Be careful, my daughter; I beseech you, be care-

ful;" said Mrs. Neville, in alarm. "Your independence may be a mere sentiment and fail in its efforts, so as to make our situation more terrible than ever. What shall I do! Oh, what shall I do!" she burst out with passionate energy, and wringing her hands, as if in despair.

"No, mamma," said Lucy, with increased fervor and resolution; "the time for such cautious fears has passed. I feel that if I am bold I will be strong. The performance of my duty will bring with it more courage. Some divine power, some invisible force is leading me onward. At once and for ever I will dismiss Mr. Slykes, and oh, permit me to say it, you are on a precipice. Dark waters are below. Oh! I pray you, I pray you, do not permit Mr. Risk to continue his attentions. I feel that he may plunge us over the brink into a sea of miseries. Let us make ourselves free and trust to our Father in Heaven."

As the young girl uttered these noble words, she looked upward, and stood before her mother with clasped hands and eyes full of light and beauty. Her face shone with an almost heavenly expression, and her lips were closed with the might of a conquering will. The spirit of independence transfused her soul and her body. The contrast was singular. Mrs. Neville's black eyes had naturally all the Arlington fire. Thoroughly feminine in person and character, she had yet an unconscious arrogance in her bearing, while Lucy, delicate, fragile, and sometimes even pensive and unusually retiring, would never have suggested

the superior power of character she was now evincing. She, in the bloom of her beautiful youth, rose to the situation—her mother, in the maturity of her womanhood, sank below it. The one resembled the fair plant bending up against the storm, and the other the trembling tree yielding to the might of the tempest.

Lucy was to be tried sooner than she supposed. Such strength never fails to find its test. Looking out of the window Miss Neville saw Mr. Slykes on the steps. She read his purpose in his look, and his attire, and formed her plans accordingly. As poverty had dismissed their waitress, she answered the ring herself, and opened the door with her own hand, and then, extending it, said, with a frank but dignified cordiality,

“Good-morning, Mr. Slykes. Will you not come in? We will be pleased to have you in the parlor.”

“Good-mornin’, Miss Neville; that’s what I’m here for,” responded the encouraged and delighted gentleman.

He entered the hall and passed into the parlor, which Mrs. Neville had abandoned in disgust and alarm, while the daughter, excusing herself for a moment, left the aspiring widower alone.

Sam Slykes was at his best, and more particularly than ever Sam Slykes. His necktie was particularly blazing; his ruby was particularly red; his diamond was particularly flashing; his foxhead was particularly sly and sharp; his clothes were particularly stylish,

and his face, look and manner particularly Slykey, vulgar and repulsive. He stands before the glass, brushing first his thin moustache and then his slight beard. See! he now slicks his recently dyed hair, and gazes at his mirrored image in complacent triumph, and then nods and talks to it in low whispered and approving words:

“Spry and smart you look, my boy—brass bright as a new locomotive! Now’s your chance my handsome widerer! Stocks down! Money gone! House mortgaged! INTER OCEANIC on a bust generally! Marry the gal, and the things t’other way, like a reversed train backin’ away from a broken bridge and runnin’ for life. Marry the gal! Lord Clare’s dead and Mrs. Neville’s next heir. Estates large; family big; genuine aristoc! So marry the gal! Will be like a parlor coach in a passenger train. Ha! may be Samuel Slykes, Esq.! Sir Samuel Slykes! Lord Slykes! Markiss Slykes! Earl Slykes! Duke Slykes! Therefore, marry the gal! Among the big bugs of old England, and Sam Slykes the biggest bug in the pile!”

While Slykes stood before the mirror talking thus admiringly and encouragingly to his own responsive image, which answered with looks equally inspiring and approving, Miss Neville entered and stood enjoying the conversation, which, however, she imagined rather than heard. When that gentleman turned from the glass, he confronted her without the least embarrassment, expecting that she would be as much pleased with him as he was pleased with himself.

Laughing, she said: "I am glad to find you in such pleasant company, Mr. Slykes. While alone, you are yet not alone. You are evidently enjoying the conversation with that charming person, and, doubtless prefer his society to my own. Pardon me; shall I retire, and leave you in your admiration?"

"No, Miss Neville, no," said the unabashed Slykes; "my business is with you, entirely with you. I didn't come to talk to a lookin'-glass."

"Yet, Mr. Slykes, you seemed remarkably happy in what the looking-glass was saying to you, and to enjoy every look and smile of your inimitable friend."

"*Seemed*, only *seemed*, Miss Neville! All right, but a little sad; sorter down—lonely, like, you understand."

"A young girl like myself, Mr. Slykes, far from home, having lost her father at sea, and witnessed so recently her grandfather's death, with a widowed mother, among strangers, and brought, as you know, from affluence to poverty, can certainly comprehend something of the word *lonely*."

"Glad to hear you talk this way, Miss Neville. It will bring our hearts together like a cross-tie. You know that I am a widerer?"

"That is a fact in your history, Mr. Slykes, I must say I have never learned. I have no doubt the late Mrs. Slykes was a worthy woman."

"A lady, Miss Neville, a lady—nice as a drawin'-room-car-chair afore the picters get wore off, and blessin' all sittin' on it, and I'll tell you how I got

her. She was Mrs. Slimsy—lost her husband—I helped her put flowers on his grave and she found another over his slumberin' bones—found me, Miss Neville. Yes; she was pious; always goin' to church and feedin' the poor, as a full tender feeds a workin' engine. But she's gone, and this world to Sam Slykes is a smokin' tunnel when the train's jist out."

"I most sincerely compassionate your misfortunes, Mr. Slykes, and only wish my ability to assist you equalled my sympathy with your situation."

"But, Miss Neville, you *can* help me, and make this breakin' heart smart as a new engine."

"I cannot even imagine, Mr. Slykes, how a poor, friendless girl like myself can do anything toward mending such broken machinery."

"You can, Miss Neville; indeed, you can," said Slykes, tenderly and emphatically, drawing near the beautiful girl as she moved further away in her rising disgust. She, however, was devoid of fear, and resolved so to play her part that the repulsive absurdity should never be repeated. Slykes would have seized her delicate hand, but even his assurance perceived the time had not yet arrived for so affectionate a demonstration. He was perfectly certain it would come.

"Miss Neville," he resumed, with a forced tenderness in his tone, and whining into her face his manufactured grief; "I said I was a smokin' tunnel when the train's jist out. The figger is not strong enough. You have fine locomotives at home! So I have heard

from Lyman and Coolie. Good as ours in America?" continued Slykes, becoming softer in his tone.

"None, sir, better in the world than those in India and in England. They've rushed me many times like lightning along the Thames and the Ganges."

"Splendid sight," exclaimed Slykes, rising with dilated eye and brightening face, as if seeing what he described. "Splendid sight is a locomotive, under full steam, flyin' over plains, windin' up mountains, dashin' through tunnels, flashin' across bridges, and a blowin' and a yellin' and a snortin' like an Arab steed, with his breath smoke, his eye fire, and his step thunder and lightning: rushing through the country and excitin' all about, and makin' the very dogs run after it barkin' mad."

"A most vivid picture, Mr. Slykes. Well done, I assure you," said Lucy, laughing.

Slykes was encouraged and delighted. He was like a bantum cock almost ready to crow and clap his wings. While sinking his voice to its most melting tones, he yet felt in his heart the glow of anticipated triumph as he exclaimed with ridiculous lugubriousness:

"But the picter has another side, Miss Lucy! See that same locomotive again after a smash up! One cylinder crushed and the t'other patched, and the engine moovin' now like a man with his leg off, a poor, creepin', puffin', pantin', laborin', lonely thing!" Then sinking before her on his knees and placing both his hands on his heart, he added:

"That's Sam Slykes, the widerer! And he begs

you, Miss Neville, on his knees, he begs you to be his other cylinder through life, and he'll take you on all right, faster nor you ever went along Thames or Ganges."

The girl expected to be amused. She grew indignant. Her blue eye shot fire as she arose above the bending Slykes, and looked down on him with all the disdain that could blaze and scathe from the whole race of the Nevilles and the Arlingtons.

"Absurd, Mr. Slykes; ridiculous and disgusting; Miss Neville declines to be the other cylinder with Mr. Samuel Slykes in the journey of life. The proposition casts suspicion on all your intentions. Sir, I now begin to fear that you have caused our misfortunes to take advantage of them. You are a villain, sir; you are a villain. Leave this house and never enter it again."

Having spoken these words, she left the room with a look of mingled disgust and dignity.

All the hereditary pride of generations had flashed and flamed into that moment, and after she retired the contemptible rascal remained on his knees as if he had been struck by lightning.

For the first time in his impudent existence he was brought consciously down to the low level of his own vulgarity. He resembled some cock of inferior blood, who, intruding on the domain of his superior, has lost comb, spurs and feathers in his battle, and been left sprawling in wounds and humiliation.

Slykes was still on his knees when Lyman Risk entered who at once comprehended the situation.

"What, Sam, making love to the sofa? Ha! my good fellow, does it return your affection? Better pillow your head on your bride, my boy, than kneel to her in that style."

Slykes arose, at last, his natural self—Sam Slykes, and nothing more.

"Why, Sam," Risk resumed, as his confederate slowly became himself again, "what's the matter? You look like my old peacock, sneaking off after some hen turkey has pecked out his tail. Your fine feathers gone, at last, my modesty."

"Fact Lyman, I'm done for," he whined out; "worse than when my old locomotive bust a biler, and threw me on a bank, arm broke, face scalded, head bruised, legs smashed, eyes bunged and in a mess generally. Yes! worse than death of Mrs. Slykes and widder-ship, Lyman. Sam Slykes knocked to bits, burst to flinders, nothing left but his smoke stack, and that black and battered, I tell you!"

"But what brought you here, Sam?" inquired Risk. "You have not told me your errand, and I cannot understand what you mean."

"I went for the gal, Lyman, and left the widder for you. I was throwd into the mud, and left stick-in', head down and heels up. But now's your time, Lyman Risk. Be smart with the widder! You'll be Lyman Risk, Esq., Sir Lyman Risk, Baron Risk, Lord Risk, Markiss Risk, Earl Risk, Duke Risk—among the first toads of the British puddle and bellowin' near the queen frog."

Having thus delivered himself, Sam Slykes retired from the room, took his hat and walked from the house, and in five minutes the fresh air made him Sam Slykes again. The mercury of his impudence was never long rising, after an unexpected zero, to the extreme fever heat of his vulgar and incurable assurance. Risk was not encouraged by what had just happened, and yet had strong hopes of success. He was playing his last card. Black Friday had blown all others from his pack, and left the INTER OCEANIC RAILWAY in a condition which must soon be made public and bring destruction. Another month would be ruin. Risk was fascinated by the woman and driven onward by an energy inspired by his terrible situation, while on her part she had long been dependent on his services, was herself on the verge of blank poverty, and shattered in nerves and discouraged in soul.

Mrs. Neville entered the room, and he arose to meet her. It was a crisis with them both. From opposite regions of the world the currents of those lives had flowed onward to this meeting point. Shall they mingle for ever or shall they for ever recoil and separate? In her plain attire, Mrs. Neville was still superb in her beauty, and you could scarcely find in the country a physically finer looking man than Lyman Risk.

The interview had been arranged to settle the question of their marriage, so that there was no need of explanation or circumlocution.

Risk sat near her, and they long conversed in subdued tones.

He did not dare to touch her hand, or even her person, but he exerted on her weakened and exhausted nature the secret, but potent, energy of his overmastering masculinity. After talking almost an hour, he said, earnestly :

"Mrs. Neville, I think we should now and forever determine our course toward each other. My distraction of mind disturbs everything in my life. It is a serious injury to my business; and you, surely, in your loneliness are needing my sympathy and protection."

"Alone, with no friend to consult, and no opportunity of inquiring about yourself, having my daughter's happiness to consider as well as my own, you will not wonder that I am bewildered, and almost distracted. I seem," she added, "like a ship tossed about by varying winds and conflicting tempests, yet ever nearing some fatal whirlpool."

"It is this very peculiarity of your situation that is the most powerful argument which urges your consent," responded Risk, with a tender and constraining energy. "While you will be relieved and defended, our marriage will call out in me all that is best. I feel that it will make me another man. You will refine me, you will elevate me, you will save me."

He arose, as he spoke these words with an eloquent earnestness. Mrs. Neville replied in tears :

"Mr. Risk, I am inclined to your proposal, and yet my

nerves are so lacerated, and my mind so wearied by misfortunes, that I am in no proper condition to decide. It appears to me that we should wait until my light grows clear. A mistake would be terrible. Delay until my judgment recovers its serenity, and then my decision will be final."

"Do not postpone your answer again," said Risk, stooping imploringly towards her. "Do not, I beseech you. Here is my heart! It beats with love for you. Here is my breast! It will afford the shelter you need. Here is my arm! It will give you defense and support. I will make your life bright and happy."

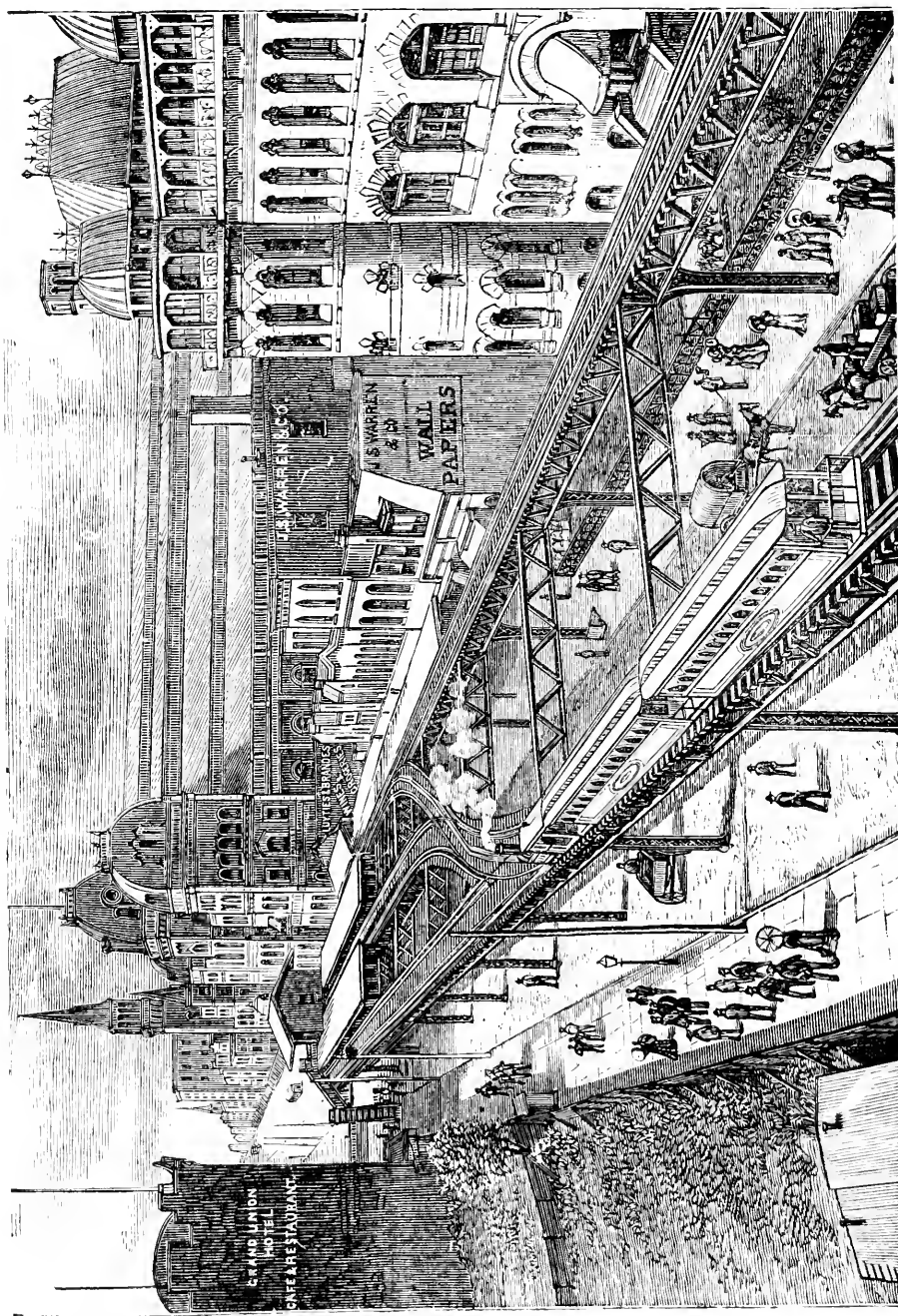
An assurance in his tone gave him power. They stood face to face. Weeping, she exclaimed, in a voice of agonizing doubt.

"What shall I do? What, what, shall I do? Will not Heaven tell me what I shall do? I am afraid to accept you, and afraid to reject you. It seems to me that under this cloud of doubt a promise would not be best."

The struggle, however, was speedily over. A woman thus expressing herself soon yields. She gave her consent, reluctant and hesitating—but she *gave* it. When the word passed her lips, she would have recalled it. It was sealed by no kiss. It was followed by no caress. It was hallowed by no token of endearment. No light was shining there. Rather all around was the shadow of a dubious darkness. Risk bade her farewell, relieved, not happy; and scarcely had he left her presence, when she repented what she had done, and

threw herself on the sofa in an agony of bewilderment and almost of despair. Arising, she paced the apartment, often sobbing and wringing her hands violently.

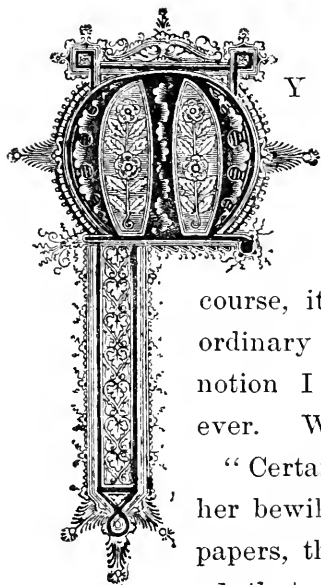
“Yes! over me is the shadow of a terrible doubt! Oh! Oscar, am I false to thee? Husband of my youth, pity my distress! Forgive, if I mistake! Smile down from Paradise on thy wretched wife! She is urged forward to this frightful abyss. She pauses, draws back, returns, retreats, and yet lingers again over the mysterious chasm! My resources are exhausted. The heavens are brass, and the earth iron, cold, cold. Oh! how, how cold! Are these men friends or plunderers? Have their artifices walled me round to possess my property, and does Risk now want my person? Oh, Poverty, thou art a strong leveller and a merciless tyrant! My Oscar, forgive me! Oh, forgive, forgive! I see thee stand so nobly on the steamer’s deck! A lurch. Heavens, thou art out on the mad billows! I hear thy cry! I see thee sink! Lost! to me for ever lost! Horrible sight! Memory, burn my heart no more, or my brain will whirl in fire! Do not reproach me, Oscar! Remember my extremity and my agony!”



"If young America wants to fly, he don't cure who pays for the wings."

CHAPTER XI.

DR. SOLOMON AND MRS. PILKILSON.



Y dear," said Judge Livingstone to his wife, "did you ever hear of an elevated railway?"

"An elevated railway!" replied the lady, "Never! Of

course, it signifies a railway above the ordinary level, but beyond this general notion I have no conception of it whatever. Will you explain it to me?"

"Certainly," said the Judge amused at her bewilderment. "I saw by the morning papers, that a charter had been obtained, and that it had been decided to sink iron

posts in some of our principal streets and avenues, to lay a track supported by these, and to rush people by steam through the air over the tops of houses and along third-story windows, across and around our city. What do you think of taking a ride, Edna? Will you buy a ticket?"

"Yes," answered Edna, laughing, "a good many tickets. I shall be delighted to be so near the sky, look down on mortals below and feel that I am flying as fast as steam can carry me. I believe in it, papa,

and all young America will agree with me. You will find such a railway immensely popular."

"No doubt," replied Mrs. Livingstone, "Edna is right in saying that it will have the favor and support of the public. But will it not darken and obstruct our streets, and deafen us with the roar and rattle of wheels? It seems to me that we will have to scream when we shop; stop our ears when we walk; strain our voices, crack our throats, and become hardened and roughened by noise, rush and excitement."

"Besides," continued Edna, "I should prefer not to be on a sick bed, with a train thundering by my window and shaking the floors and walls of the house. I must confess, with all my partiality for the scheme, that it would be hard for weak nerves, and almost insufferable for the neighborhood. But if young America wants to fly, he don't care who pays for the wings."

"You joke, Edna," said the Judge, seriously; "yet, after all, you have touched the true objections. Such an enterprise is an injustice. It will, indeed, be delightful and exhilarating to have so swift and lofty a race, and feel that sense of power and superiority so agreeable to us Republicans. But the injury to property will be enormous and beyond any possible compensation. Every post will be planted in wrong; every train will rush over ruined rights and wrecked estates, and its thunders will excite in men tempests of indignation and revenge. No European city would tolerate such a scheme. It would hurl down any throne in

Europe, except the Czar's, and shake that if the Nihilists prosper."

"Why, papa," cried Edna, in her merry, ringing voice, "you are turning monarchist. We shall be swearing allegiance to Queen Victoria yet. On what street shall we live in London?"

"Not so fast, daughter," said the Judge, smiling, as his indignation expended itself. "We are not quite ready for Belgravia. I never loved my country so well and never had such faith in her mission and her future. But I do her most service by discriminating between her faults and her virtues. It is my work in life to fight villainy and promote justice, however great the trouble, or the peril."

"Do you think such a railway would be long tolerated?" inquired Mrs. Livingstone. "It seems to me that it would be unnatural and fall finally by its own weight."

"This is my own opinion," said the Judge, thoughtfully. "Perhaps it would stand for years. But I should fear accidents. Suppose a train should leap a track, crash through a wall, set a house on fire, explode a boiler and scatter around flames, ruin and death! Such a catastrophe might end the enterprise. Still, I foresee that the ELEVATED RAILWAY will have its day. It will be for years a great popular success. But at last will be heard the rumble of powder in the rocks below our streets. We will dig an honest tunnel beneath our city, and take our honest ride by honest gaslight, and if not so fast and jolly a people,

we will be more sensible and reliable, and wonder at our past frolics in the air."

While the Judge was speaking, Frank entered the room with an unusually sober face. He held the evening paper in his hand, and was evidently reflecting on what he had been reading.

"Why Frank," said Edna, merrily, "what has happened? Instead of an aspiring young lawyer, with bright prospects before him, you look serious as a judge who has been on the bench ten years, and doubts his re-election by our Sovereigns."

"And I have good reason to be serious," said Frank, becoming excited as he spoke. "You will feel as sober as I look when you hear the evening news. Father, please read that," he exclaimed, while his eye flashed.

The Judge took the extended paper, cast his eyes hastily over the columns, arrested his gaze for an instant, and then burst out with violent indignation:

"The infamous INTER OCEANIC RAILWAY ACT has passed. All our efforts have failed. We shall be driven out of this house."

"Impossible!" cried Mrs. Livingstone; "such injustice is impossible."

"What can you mean, papa?" exclaimed Edna, in a state of mingled alarm and confusion. "Be driven out of our own house in which Frank and I were born, and where our ancestors have lived for so many generations!"

"Just what I mean, my daughter," said the Judge,

with suppressed anger. "My blood boils at the thought. Our home is to be confiscated by a legislative act to make place for a vast addition to the grounds and depot of the INTER OCEANIC RAILWAY."

"What we all expected," cried Frank, in a storm of passion. "The nominating convention was bribed; the voters were bribed; the legislators were bribed; even the Judges and the Executive were bribed. We have resisted the corrupt and overshadowing monopoly at every step. So far it has beaten us; but I will never quit the fight until I see its ruin."

"There spoke a Livingstone, my son," said the Judge, with a gleam of pleasure and triumph. "I pledge myself with you in the battle. In the end victory will be ours. Still, our house will have to be surrendered to the robbers."

"Our house! Mr. Livingstone! This house! this place, sacred in our hearts, and endeared by so many family histories and recollections! Surely you jest or dream," said Mrs. Livingstone, in utter wonder.

"Neither one nor the other, my dear," replied the Judge. "Nor have I, just now, any special disposition for jokes or fancies. Here have the Livingstones been born and have died for generations. Washington, Jefferson, Jay, Hamilton, and other founders of our Government, have often been under this roof. No American home is hallowed by so many historical associations. Behold that picture of my father! I almost see indignation burn on those features at the thought of being taken down and borne

away at the command of public plunderers. This old furniture will be carried out. These old walls will be torn down. Even the old foundations will be removed. Over the ruins of our home will rise the GRAND INTER OCEANIC DEPOT. The locomotive will soon be hissing and screaming on the very spot where we are now talking."

Mrs. Livingstone began to comprehend the facts. At first, the result seemed incredible. Her vivid woman's fancy now pictured the dismantled dwelling, and towering over the consecrated place a gigantic edifice erected by fraud and tyranny. She exclaimed :

"And this is liberty ! That of robbers to take what they will. Our land is called a refuge from oppression. Here are worse than European tyrannies. We still boast that over our soil float the stars which waved above heroes. They are dimmed and darkened by a midnight of fraud, black as the gloom of the civil war. Yet, I trust in Heaven. Deliverance will come for this fair and noble land. Our country, hallowed by the blood of martyrs, will never be cast out like a carcass, and devoured by birds of prey. Stand by her, my husband and my son ! Stand by her in every extremity ! Light will come ! Truth will triumph ! Our flag will float over not only a united but a pure and Christian people."

This eloquence thrilled every heart. Mrs. Livingstone, as she spoke, seemed to glow again into the beauty of her youth. Her presence was majestic, and her words never to be forgotten. Indeed, their influ-

ence was destined to extend beyond the sanctities of that home, and be left on the country forever. Yes ! in that hour, woman's faith kindled an unquenchable flame, and led onward to a noble victory. It was a crisis in the history of the nation which seemed sinking in a sea of corruption. The triumph of the INTER OCEANIC RAILWAY would have perpetuated the reign of fraud for generations.

Judge Livingstone and Frank Livingstone were to be the saviors of the country, and it was the courage of this wife and mother which, in an hour of extremity, inspired them for the battle.

But the solemn grandeur of this domestic scene was now suddenly and boisterously disturbed by numerous quick, nervous jerks at the door-bell.

"Why," exclaimed the Judge, "who can be at the door? That bell seems jerked by a madman. Worse and worse ! Surely some excited spirits are frolicking with our wires."

The noise ceased and was followed by a hush of expectation. Soon, through the open door, came two persons, whom it becomes our duty, as faithful chroniclers of those times, to describe.

Dr. Solomon Pilkilson and Mrs. Dorothea Pilkilson were coming down the farther extremity of the Livingstone drawing-room.

That gentleman was enormous in all his proportions. His stature was gigantic, and his corpulent rotundity swelled out like a hogshead. His mouth seemed from ear to ear ; his nose was wide, long and round below to

beefiness; his cheeks protuberant: his forehead broad, red and high; his eyes small, deep-set, gray, and twinkling beneath huge, overhanging, shaggy brows, while his feet and hands were almost hideous in their vast unsightliness. About his back and breast was a great, grizzled overcoat, hanging with armless sleeves, as if thrown on in haste, and greatly increasing his appearance of ponderous magnitude. When he laughed, his elephantine ears moved and flapped with an elephantine peculiarity. He looked like a man who could devour a beef and empty a beer-barrel in the least possible time and with the greatest possible satisfaction. Above his overcoat was a shawl, and around his throat a heavy woolen scarf. His large winter gloves and huge overshoes did not detract from your estimate of his size. Good nature beamed over his great face, while cunning twinkled in his small, restless, piercing eyes.

Mrs. Dorothea Pilkilson was a feminine Dr. Solomon Pilkilson, pressed down into a lower stature and proportionally bulged out in breadth, with a pug nose in the midst of her broad face, and in all respects precisely the wife for a husband she loved and adored. Arm-in-arm they resembled two of their own largest pill-barrels, moving or rather rolling down the room.

When the mighty pair, panting, puffing, and perspiring, reached the Livingstone group, they stood a moment in all their gigantic redness, width, and height. Then, as from the depths of a human hogshead, issued a loud and grating voice the ear never more forgot, but which the pen fails to describe.

"Good-evening, Judge Livingstone and Mr. Frank! Excuse me for coming at this hour and to your house instead of your office. Let me present my wife, Mrs. Solomon Pilkilson!"

The two gentlemen bowed and shook the ponderous hands of the great physician and his wife.

"Let me now present you," said the Judge to his huge client and his spouse, "to Mrs. Livingstone and my daughter, Miss Edna. My son, I believe, you both know."

Mrs. Solomon Pilkilson seemed for a moment confused. She was evidently making a heavy draft upon her memory. She has it! A recollection, flashing over her, illuminates her features, and she bursts out in a coarse, unfeminine voice, full of honest good nature :

"La, I remember now! Dr. Solomon and me was driving out in our dog-cart in the park, when the horse scared, and spilled us out in a heap. You're the very young gentleman what helped me get up, sat Dr. Solomon on his legs, and druv us home in your carriage. We shall be quite at home here, now. Dr. Solomon, let me take that shawl off your face! I'll hold your gloves. He's hotter nor a kitchen range or a patent furnace. I bundled him up to keep the cold out. Don't be excited, Dr. Solomon, I'll fan you."

She removed the shawl; she held the gloves; she plied the fan, not with the grace of a Diana, but with a heartiness which evinced her affectionate idol-

atry towards the great physician. Nor for one moment during the interview did she relax the fury of her exertions.

Judge Livingstone perceived that there was an unusual tempest stirring his magnitudinous old client.

"My good doctor," he said, "what has happened to disturb you so violently?"

"Happened, Judge! Happened, did you say?" he magnificently inquired. "Look on your table! Before your very eyes, as we doctors say professionally, is the excitin' cause of my nervous irritability and the stimulant to the heated action of my venous and arterial blood."

"On my table, Doctor," said the Judge in surprise. "On my table. I cannot understand you. I did not think that in all my house there could be anything offensive to you."

"Yes, Judge, I say, yes!" he exclaimed with emphasis and rising excitement. "No fault of yours. Yet, on that table lies what has stirred my heart, riled my liver, fired my blood, and made my system fulminate like a barrel of dynamite. In that Evening Gazette is the spark that exploded me. The INTER OCEANIC CONFISCATION ACT, that is to tear away my palatial manshun—*that* has fired me up worse than when they counterfeit my pill-labels, and sell under my name their quack mixtures : injurin' society, enfeeblin' human constitutions, and affectin' the business and the reputation of Dr. Solomon Pilkilson, and makin' him tremble from his shirt-bosom down through

his pockets to the skirts of his coats and other garments."

"It is, indeed, a trial to all honest men," replied the Judge. "We, ourselves, are fellow sufferers, and are to be expelled from the house of our fathers. The law is infamous; but, for the present, villains must triumph. We must fight these fellows, however, until we conquer and make their rascally corporation known in history as the 'BROKEN RING.'"

"My father and myself," cried Frank, with enthusiasm, "have to-night renewed our vows of devotion to our cause and country. The ladies share our spirit, and help us by their faith and courage. Our family stands united and we expect to triumph."

These words rekindled the whole group. Mrs. Pilkilson grinned and shook with her huge, honest delight. She burst out:

"We'll jine you, Judge; we'll jine you, Mr. Frank; we'll jine you, ladies. We'll jine you with our words; we'll jine you with our deeds; we'll jine you with our money; we'll jine you with our hearts and heads. We'll jine you, yes, with the last pill."

Dr. Pilkilson caught the flame. He could no longer sit, but, suddenly rising, threw down the gloves, shawl and the fan, held by Mrs. Solomon, and, as she stooped to pick up the scattered articles, Dr. Solomon Pilkilson cleared his throat, blew his nose, and made sundry other oratorical preparations. With his gruff voice and the most earnest expression in face, eye and gesture, he made his whole gigantic

person tremble with the deep roar of his guttural eloquence, and delivered a speech, which will be remembered with the grander efforts of Demosthenes, Cicero and Daniel Webster.

“Yes, Mrs. Solomon,” he began, “to the very last pill. My father, Judge, was a veterinary physician and a vaccinery surgent, and, by the shades of all the patients he bled, purged, and mended, I’ll give my profeshnul talents and my parsonal energies and my public influence to the task of expurgatin’ these varments gnawin’ on the vitals of our country, and of dispellin’ out the pisin from the corrupted veins and arteries of the diseased body politic. Yes; truly, Mrs. Solomon, that sentiment was healthful. I agree with you. I, too, am in to the last pill. Pills made me what I am. Pills brought me to this expandin’ Metropolis. Pills made my bank stocks, my railway securities, my minin’ shares. Pills built my magnificent store and erected and furnished my spacious, ample, and elegant manshun. Pills bought my carts, wagons, sleighs, buggies, carriages and other vehicles. Pills feeds my wife, cook, coachman, footman, gardener, children and other servants, besides numerous widows and orphans. Pills have advertised my name over this planet, and placed in grand and even sublime proportions the phiz and figger of Dr. Solomon Pilkinson over the roarin’ Niagra, the blusterin’ Atlantic and sleepin’ Pacific, on rocks, roofs, fences, sign-boards, rails, stables, stakes and curb-stones, and even over walkin’ men and women and numerous

city wagons, on mountains, down valleys, acrost plains and prairies—yes, fernentz the very temple of St. Peter's in the Etarnal City. Pills is to me clothes, house, food, fame, flesh, fortune in this life, and after death under the shadow of a Pill on the top of my mausolyum will sleep the dust and bones of Dr. Solomon Pilkilson."

"Why, Doctor," interrupted the Judge, with seeming surprise, "I thought that globe on your monument in the city of the dead represented your world-wide reputation."

"For once and only once, mistaken, my learned friend," he replied, with solemn emphasis. "A pill; *the* pill! I may say, *last* pill, a sign for the dead and an advertisement for the living—useful and ornamental—an emblem of my profeshun and a proclamation of my business—and yet I'll sell that monumental pill, and that monumental pile, rather than we shall want a dollar to swamp this plunderin' Railway."

"While Dr. Solomon Pilkilson was discoursing with such characteristic eloquence, there was another interruption from the region of the front door, which caused Judge Livingstone to say.

"I am sorry, sir, that this noble burst of patriotic and professional indignation has been interrupted in so loud and unpleasant a manner. Our very bells seem maddened by our wrongs."

The Judge had scarcely spoken these words, when Mr. Samuel Slykes appeared at the door, and not in the least diminished in his effrontery by any of his

recent experiences. He moved down the drawing-room with the most brazen assurance, and, standing before the group, nodded his head in a patronizing style, saying :

“Good-evenin’, gentlemen and ladies—fine speech, Dr. Solomon, as the stoker said to the steam whistle when it called him to dinner. Honest sentiments and weighty as a forty ton locomotive—hard on the INTER OCEANIC, but she can stand the abuse on her own property.”

“Her own property, sir,” exclaimed the Judge, stirred into sudden storm; “do you insult me in my own house by claiming it for that rascally corporation? The impudence is intolerable. If you are an agent of that devouring monster, let me inform you that my office and not my parlor is the place where I transact my business.”

“All right, Judge,” said the unabashed Slykes; “will call there next time—preferred the first interview at your home—wanted to see how property looked; found Dr. Solomon was here, and concluded to serve notice on you together and save time.”

“Serve me!” cried the Judge, with tempestuous anger. “You do not mean to say that at this hour, and in this parlor, you have come to give me notice to quit my own premises? You dare not carry your impudence so far!”

“No offence intended, Judge,” said Slykes, taking two papers from his pocket, and examining them for an instant. “Here’s documents for you and Pilkilson;

so long as you're served, what's the difference? If the boiler makes steam, it doesn't ask what wood's in the fire."

"But, Mr. Slykes, I positively decline being served here, and if you persist, will order you from my house," exclaimed the Judge, with increased indignation and a more irate emphasis.

"Can't help it, sir," Slykes replied, with a face hard as the brass of a locomotive. "The INTER OCEANIC my first duty—here are the two papers—one for you and the other for the Doctor. If you don't receive them, will read them and leave the premises."

"You shall not read them, sir," cried Judge Livingstone, rising. "I forbid you. If you do not leave my house I will call my servants and order them to thrust you from the door."

Frank Livingstone now leaped from his chair and approached Slykes to enforce his father's threat, saying :

"You villain ; this is unendurable ; leave this room ; there is the door ; leave instantly ; leave, I say leave, or you will be sorry while you live for every moment you remain."

The ponderous frame of Dr. Solomon Pilkilson was now seen slowly lifting itself from the chair, when Mrs. Pilkilson, bursting into a blaze, anticipated her husband by yelling out, with appropriate gestures, the following not very refined words :

"Sarve us, if you dare. Get out, you varmin ! Clear off or I will be in your hair ; I'll tear you into

bits; I'll crush you like a cockroach; I'll mash you like a musketer."

Slykes saw that the physical and moral power were against him. He retreated, but was not vanquished. Closing and then locking the parlor door, he stood in the hall, master of the situation, leaving the Judge and his party prisoners within and burning with indignation. He now lifted up his voice and, with shrill impudence, read this provoking notice in the following terms:

"Henry Livingstone and Solomon Pilkilson are hereby notified that the INTER OCEANIC RAILWAY is empowered by an Act of Legislature to seize and use their dwellings, and the land on which they are erected, for its new depot, and they are required to vacate the premises in ten days from this date."

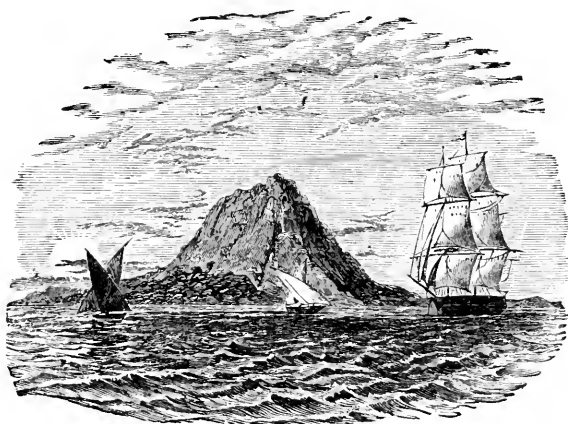
Then, to aggravate the insult, the rascal cried:

"Sam Slykes won't forget this treatment. Good-by, ladies and gentlemen! May you have a pleasin' introduction to our new grand INTER OCEANIC DEPOT! You must soon leave our premises like hot steam from a safety-valve. So put on the brakes, and stop your infernal scoldin'. Good-by, old Hospitality!"

Slykes now went to the hall-door and opened it so as to leave a way to retreat. He then put on his hat and gloves with the utmost deliberation, and, unlocking the parlor-door, and thrusting it sufficiently ajar, flung in the notices on the floor. After this performance he left with all convenient speed. This farewell impudence raised indignation into rage. Passion, however, was

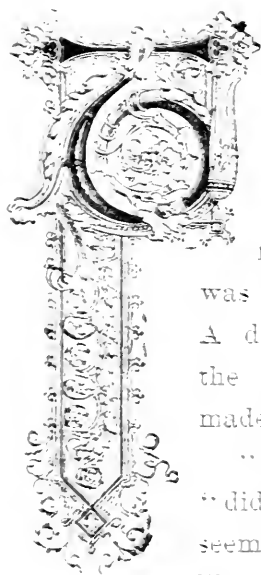
soon followed by a sense of the ludicrous in the grotesque scene, and Judge Livingstone, laughing, said :

“What a curious mixture of farce and fight ! How nearly the most opposite feelings of human nature lie together, like the smile and the tear which express them ! We laugh and we rage in the same moment. I mourn over the degradation of my country and ridicule the instruments of her humiliation. Yet, in the excitement we now feel, I perceive the indications of a rising popular tempest, destined to purify our social and political atmosphere and sweep from the earth colossal corruptions reared by private fraud and corporate villainy.”



CHAPTER XII.

LYMAN RISK'S MARRIAGE.



HE two women were merry that morning. It was as if the lark and the robin had formed an alliance of song and of joy to make field and wood musical. Their room was fragrant and beautiful with flowers. A decanter of wine stood glittering in the light. Every preparation had been made for a day of private festal delight.

"Jane Slag," inquired Olive Neilson, "didn't I hit him harder than ever? I seemed to myself on the stage last night like a human porcupine letting arrows fly in every direction and each tipped with the flame of poison."

"Olive," replied Jane, "you never before approached last night's performance. Every part of that little body talked, laughed and blazed. It was wonderful. The house clapped, yelled, roared in an ecstasy of surprise, delight and admiration. Never will the muse of tragedy suffer the night to be forgotten."

"I felt it in me, Jane," the actress resumed, "and it had to come out. It was all reality; nothing was

amirated. It was feeling rather that action and word, tone, face and gesture were the true interpreters of my soul. Some feeling was blazing in me. My spirit seemed fire darting light and power. And when I made allusion to him, Kate inspired me with an overwhelming power. I must have spoken and acted like a demon. (Oh, it was a glorious triumph.)

Yes, it was. Olive Nelson was a genius. In her the dramatic art had found its feminine ideal. In the pleasure she expressed were neither vanity nor pride. Her genius bubbled and sparkled incessantly as a fountain or a star. She now danced and pranced and leaped and laughed at the recollections of the evening when the thought of him spread a cloud over her countenance.

After a brief but painful pause, Jane abruptly asked:

"And what did you think of my last article in *Woman's Rights*?"

The face of Olive Nelson changed instantly into light. It was like a shadow lifted from a landscape. Laughing and clapping her hands early and gracefully she said:

"Capital! splendid! masterly! a credit to our sex. You exceeded yourself. No masculine performance in America ever approached the vigor and originality of Jane Slag's leader of yesterday. It sparkled with wit and bristled with argument. How you hit him. Every shaft tipped with fire. May the points pierce and burn until he ends his miserable existence by suicide."

The two women capered and exulted like a pair of happy lunatics. They kissed, they smiled, they laughed, they embraced. Why not? It was their way and day of joy.

The two women sat down to their coffee after the excitements of their exuberant delight.

"And you saw them, Olive?" inquired her friend, with an expression of doubt. "Yes," answered the actress with a world of significance in look and nod; "I saw them both!"

"Tell me what they are like," said Jane, sipping her coffee, and then putting down her cup and bending toward Olive a keen, fierce, inquiring gaze that made her gray eye have the glance of an eagle.

"The elder," replied Olive, "resembled a queen and the younger a princess. Both are superb in their English beauty, although plain in their attire and pale with sorrow. They looked as if they ought to live among kings and nobles, and inspired me with the deepest admiration and respect. There is some secret in their history."

"But how," inquired Jane, "could you gain access to them after so many failures?"

"By persistence," answered Olive; "persistence," she repeated, with her histrionic emphasis, "that key to all success and even heaven itself. First, I assumed the guise of a female bookseller and failed. Then I resolved to change my dress and occupation until I succeeded. Finally, after repeated repulses, a *needle* unlocked the door."

"A *needle*?" exclaimed Jane, in a voice of amused wonder; "you surely jest; explain to me your meaning."

"Yes," replied Olive, smiling; "a *needle* was my key, but I did not place it in the lock and turn the bolt. The ladies happened to want that small, pointed necessary, and so, when I last presented myself with my box, they admitted this little imposition that they might make a purchase. In this way I had an excellent view of them. They are splendid women, mother and daughter. Imagine a mature crimson and a young white rose together, and you have my conception of their beauty."

"Oh, how I pity them," said Jane Slag, with a tear in her cold eye; "I would save them if I could, but it is destiny."

"Why should we weep?" exclaimed Olive fiercely. "For me the time for tears has gone. My heart is rock and winter. A drop would freeze on my eyelid. I am flame only when I think of *him*. We have watched, Jane, and waited for this day. Its hour has struck. You have written and I have acted with one burning purpose which has married our lives. You will see this night what you will remember. Yes! the day is here—the hour will come, and then the moment. I hear the note in the air. It sounds like doom. Not Heaven stops the hammer when fate ordains the stroke. To-night; Jane, to-night! Oh, to-night! You cannot now have my secret. But *to-night* you will see. You will hear, you will never

forget! It will live in the history of the city. It will be trumpeted through the country. It will be flashed over the world. Nay! in future times, it will be the theme of poets, novelists and orators, and thrill thousands on the stage. *To-night!* All is predetermined, Jane; It is *our* destiny and *his*."

As Olive Neilson spoke, her excitement kindled her into the ideal of her own art.

The two women! Who are they? What is the meaning of this conversation? What is the secret of their lives? The two women! They dwelled together in the eighth story of a lofty edifice and were lifted up and dropped down by an elevator.

What a difference in habits wrought by steam! Once we lunched in the low, dark, damp, disgusting basement, looking out against ugly walls, and into the gloom of black vaults, and breathing sickening and oppressive odors. Now, magic transportation! Step into an elevator! A rope is touched! You are lifted upward in a steady ascent, easily and noiselessly, story after story. Again the touch of a rope; you stop at your desired floor; you step into the hall; you move toward a window. What a view! You gaze over the tops of houses; over the bright bay; over the towns and villages beyond; far, far away to the green fields and the distant mountains. Sit down now to your airy and inviting table! How refreshing! You are fanned by Summer breezes through the opened windows, and surrounded by the clear light of heaven! Steam has lifted you from the earth nearer to the

sky, as it is elevating humanity itself to a better and brighter existence.

Jane Slag and Olive Neilson had found this secret of modern life, and taken lofty apartments, where they could see the sun, watch the clouds, gaze over the waters, and on the mountains, and into the blue of heaven, and freshen and brighten the lonely existence to which they had consecrated themselves.

The two women! I will tell you who they are.

Jane Slag was a plain girl and the daughter of a farmer. She had loved, trusted and been betrayed. Coming to the Metropolis, she worked, studied and persisted, developing unusual intellectual abilities, and at last establishing and editing a weekly paper which had become a power in the land, and which she used as a battering ram against the lofty fortifications of the man, who had left her in her ruin.

Olive Neilson was in every respect the opposite of Jane Slag. She was the daughter of a wandering Italian harpist, and went over the country singing and dancing for her father, until he died. One day, she was weeping under a tree, near a road. A coach rolled by. The driver, compassionating her lonely condition, invited her to ride on the box. She consented. He afterwards educated her, promised to marry her and then betrayed her. She, too, came to the city; grew into extraordinary beauty, and shone as a genius on the stage; becoming in the Metropolis the celebrity of the hour. These were the two women. It was the same man who had taken advan-

tage of their trust. Since, they had led lives of virtue, and consecrated themselves to overthrow the villain by whose arts they had fallen. *He* was the person to whom they were constantly alluding, but never with a mention of his name, which, with a feminine loathing, they avoided, as too infamous for their lips.

Day was wearing away and night approached. The sun gleams across the bay and sinks behind the mountains. Jane Slag and Olive Neilson sit at a window, gazing at the sails gliding like phantoms through the evening gloom. Venus fades in the west. Now Jupiter blazes forth, and Saturn shines dimly, and hanging near the Pleiades is the red light of Mars, and soon the stars are glittering, and the moon is coming up out of the waters with a face cold as destiny, and the two women are warned that the hour is near.

They attire themselves elegantly and with scrupulous care, and as the elevator has ceased its daily journeyings, they climb slowly down the stairs. See! they have reached the street. A splendid carriage awaits their descent, and soon they are rolling along the avenue, whirling by houses, and flashing under gas-lights, until, far up into the city, they stop before a church. Entering together, they pass down the aisle, and occupy a side pew near the chancel.

Evidently it is the occasion of a great wedding. The lights are yet dim, but you can discern, from column to column, the brilliant bloom of festooning flowers. Roses blush in clusters on font, and altar,

and pulpit, mingling their fragrance with the sweetness of mignonette and honeysuckle. The air is breathing with perfume.

Now the crowd begins to assemble. The pews are soon filled. Even the aisles become crowded. A bright blaze bursts over the church, and music peals from the organ the notes of marriage joy. At every entrance people turn their heads in expectation. The two women gaze eagerly toward the door. Attired in his white surplice, the clergyman waits behind the chancel rail.

A loud rattle of wheels; a hush in the assembly; a quiet turning of faces, and a flutter at the door. Lyman Risk comes down the aisle with Mrs. Neville on his arm, and Lucy at her mother's side—both pale and agitated.

They stand before the clergyman and the solemn service begins. Nothing unusual occurs until he reaches the words: "Whom God has joined together, let no man put asunder." This sentence ended, a sound seemed to burst down from the roof of the church. Now it moves along the arches toward the front, it lingers on the top of the pillar, and, returning toward the chancel, is heard above the altar; then it shrieks over the head of the bride and groom; rising, sinking, whispering, quivering, thrilling, screaming, roaring, until every part of the edifice, vocal with the sounds, is repeating, as with an invisible and ubiquitous tongue, "Whom man hath joined together, God will curse asunder."

The bride, screaming in agony, fell to the floor, and her daughter knelt terrified at her side.

Lyman Risk felt no fear, but was kindled into an inextinguishable hate and rage. That voice wakened murder in his soul. Blood was in it. He knew the cause. Stepping hastily toward Jane Slag and Olive Neilson, he stooped and whispered fiercely:

“Stop this infernal noise or I will kill you both.”

There was a moment's cessation, but when Risk turned away from the two women the sounds commenced again with fresh vigor and variety.

The people began to leave the house in alarm, and the vast edifice was speedily empty. Risk lifted Mrs. Neville from the floor, and bore her to the carriage, followed by Lucy. He did not enter, but gave directions that the ladies should be driven to his house on the avenue. In the meantime, Jane Slag and Olive Neilson, mingling with the retiring crowd, disappeared.

Soon, however, they could be seen in their carriage driving furiously toward the great edifice in which were their lonely apartments. Reaching it, they ascended in silent gloom the lofty stairs, flight after flight, and entering their room, sat down without a word.

A shadow from destiny was over the place. The stars were hid and the moon was gone, and in a low dark cloud was a lightning glare, succeeded by a hoarse rumble of thunder. Dread, not delight was in the scene. The two women had been temperate in their habits and correct in their lives. But they

could not endure the oppression of their hearts. Seizing the decanter, they poured out the sparkling wine and soon felt its exhilaration. Here was the inspiration they needed, and cup was drained after cup.

Now the two women were happy. Their festal joy had come. Fierce triumph gleamed from their eyes, flushed in their cheeks and flamed in their tongues. They drank to Lyman Risk. They drank to his bride. They drank to the marriage. They drank to themselves, and drank and drank. As the wine began to heat the blood and whirl the brain, Jane Slag cried:

"Oh, Olive, how unfailing the resources of thy unmatched genius! What gay wedding sounds! More suitable than the scent and bloom of flowers, and the peal of the organ! How charming for the bride! How delightful for the groom! What pleasant memories for both! The angel of vengeance made thee his trumpet, Olive, and truly didst thou blow the wild notes of destiny!"

"Yes," she replied, the excitement of the wine kindling in her a tragic fire. "Pale and shivering as a ghost stood and swooned the bride, while the guilty groom stalked and trembled like a spectre of darkness. Oh, the mad joy of the moment! My tongue was the voice of fate. In my words was—doom, doom, doom!"

The two women rose, kissed, shrieked, embraced, sang, danced, exulted, until, exhausted by exertion and excitement, they sank into each other's arms on the bed, and were soon buried in slumbers.

Where was Risk? He has lied, cheated, plotted,

plundered, lived for this hour. He stands by his glorious bride in triumph. Not only was her magnificent beauty his, but with her he dreams of the Arlington title and the Arlington estate. His wildest youthful fancies had never aspired so high. Flowers are there; music is there; friends are there; Church and State are represented there to consummate his bliss. Hope waves her golden wings and smiles over the head of Risk. But above him stands the angel of vengeance glaring on the man. Before he reached the place his old life was there. Jane Slag and Olive Neilson were there. The ghosts of his sins were there, shrieking around the sacred edifice in judgment and in ruin.

Oh, how our deeds follow us! How our very thoughts become our tormentors and punishers! How guilt opens graves along evil lives, and brings forth skeletons to mock and leer and blast the transgressor! Eyeless and tongueless skulls arise to flame and thunder into the conscience!

Lyman Risk wandered from street to street like a spectre. He sought rest and found none. Instead of sleeping in the arms of his bride, he was like a ghost gliding through the midnight. By some mysterious attraction, he is drawn unconsciously on and on, always in the same direction; on and yet on toward the building where the two women are asleep. He knew it well. Often, when writhing under their assaults, he had gone there, foaming and raging, to vainly beg and threaten. No mercy was ever found for him in

those breasts. His pleas were disregarded, and he was by them ridiculed and made contemptible. Now he enters the great door, and ascends the stairs not many hours before pressed by their weary feet. See! he is at the top. With no special purpose, he moves down the hall. He stands before the lonely bedroom door which destiny has left open. The gas-jet is ablaze and the two women are sleeping in its bright light.

Risk saw the scattered flowers, the emptied decanter, the signs of the festivity, and the flushed and glowing cheeks of his tormentors clasped in affectionate embrace. The devil rose within him. He had come for no evil purpose. But the sight was too much for him. He can have revenge for the past and quiet for the future, and no man shall know it. His face grows black with rage, and his eyes blaze fierce with joy, and, without time for thought, he has clutched with an iron grasp the throats of his victims. So strangled, they cannot scream. Indeed, under the sudden pressure of blood they do not see. But they twist and writhe with a fearful energy.

The man is too strong for them. He seems armed with an infernal power. Now, his fingers close with a tightening clasp. Resistance grows feebler and feebler. Those two faces swell and blacken; those two spirits pass from their bruised flesh together; those two still bodies lie ghastly before him, and Lyman Risk is a MURDERER.

He had not intended it. But when a soul begins an evil career, and the doors of the citadel are left

open, and the walls unguarded, and passion and appetite hold revel within, spirits of darkness, drawn by a kindred attraction, soon enter, and Satan is the master of the man, to rule his slave forever.

For a moment, Risk gloated over the ruin he had wrought. The joy was brief. He turned away, but feared to pass down the stairs into the street, and looked out from a window. Escape there was hopeless. He turned out the light, groped through the darkness, descended three flights, climbed out on a roof, and ran wildly over the tops of the houses, like a flying maniac. The moon, suddenly shining from a cloud, revealed the wretch rushing onward in an agony of terror. Coming to a lower house, he clambered down a lightning rod, and continued his race. Obstructed again, he stood a moment on the edge of a roof, and leaped through the air into a pile of sand, into which he sank and sank, until it suggested his grave; and then he flung himself out in speechless fear, covered with the glittering particles, and, wandering until morning, returned to his house like a spectre.

Of all living mortals, he alone may know that murderous deed—but *he* will know it *forever*.

It will be in Lyman Risk an eternal memory and an eternal torment.



CHAPTER XIII.

INTER OCEANIC SAFE ENTERED.



ON the night of the wedding Frank Livingstone had been sauntering down the avenue for exercise. His thoughts, as usual, were busy with plans to complete the legal proofs against the INTER OCEANIC conspirators. As he walked leisurely before a church, a screen and carpet indicated a wedding within. He knew nothing farther of the occasion, and concluded at a venture to enter. Mingling in the stream he soon found himself in a rear pew on the middle aisle. The lights were blazing and the organ pouring forth its jubilant music. Attracted by approaching footsteps, he turned his head and instantly his heart was beating in wild tumult. There SHE WAS—the object of his dreams and his plans. Their eyes met in recognition, as hindered by others she almost touched him.

Her cheek, flushing in the light, was more radiant than ever, and, although plainly attired, the grace of her form and motion made her beauty exquisite. His image had followed her as her image had followed him. Memory in each had been faithful to its trust.

So occupied was he with the daughter that, until the service had begun, he did not notice the mother. Nor did he, for some time, recognize Risk. Suddenly, the whole horrible truth glared before him. He was too late to prevent the catastrophe. When his excitement was becoming furious, the fearful noise shivered and shrieked about the church, and he saw Mrs. Neville fall, and Lucy kneeling over her. While the people scattered in alarm, he remained, and, as the mother was carried down the aisle, he stood before the daughter, and said to her in a few low, hurried words :

“I am Frank Livingstone, son of a distinguished Judge of this city. Perhaps, you may remember me as a fellow passenger on the *Britannia*. Will your mother receive an important communication from me? If so, please mention the time and the place.”

Miss Neville perceived instantly the importance of such a friend, and replied in the same tone :

“We will see you on to-morrow morning at eleven o’clock at the house of Mr. Risk on the avenue.”

Frank Livingstone took no time to call a carriage. He ran to his father’s house, reached it breathless, and, rushing into the study, found the Judge occupied in writing an opinion, to be delivered next morning. Looking up from his paper, he was surprised to see his son agitated and exhausted, and said to him, smilingly :

“Why, Frank, what has happened? Is the city in flames?”

"No, sir," replied Frank, greatly agitated; "but you perceive that I am."

"I see it, clearly. You are on fire," replied the Judge, with a suspicious laugh. "Something more about the English ladies. You are always trembling and breathless when they are involved. Tell me what has occurred."

"I have seen the ladies—seen them both—seen them within fifteen minutes," Frank cried, with the greatest agitation.

"That is, indeed, important news," said the Judge, laying down his pen, and lifting his glasses back on his brow. "I fear it will delay my opinion which the lawyers expect at the opening of our morning session. Narrate to me, at once, what you have seen."

Frank Livingstone then gave a clear and brief account of what happened at the church. When he had finished, the Judge exclaimed:

"This is, indeed, extraordinary. An event certainly, and to be long remembered. What caused the sounds? Spirits, I suppose."

"A spirit," replied Frank; "but a spirit with the help of lungs, lips and tongue. I saw there Jane Slag and Olive Neilson, who so mercilessly lash Risk. The latter is, I suspect, a ventriloquist, and has taken some sharp revenge in these hideous and unearthly sounds."

"Doubtless the true solution, but I fear the marriage was consummated."

"That does not admit of question," said Frank, with

a flush of indignation. "What should now be our course?"

"That we must consider immediately and carefully;" and then, smiling, the Judge added: "I do not believe you like so near a connection with Risk. You will be prolific in expedients to untie this knot."

Frank's color deepened as he answered:

"I hope my exertions are not wholly selfish. But this is not the time to weigh our motives; we want action—*instant action*."

"The case is now clear and our course plain," said the Judge, with decision in every line of his face and tone of his voice. "A crisis has arrived. At all hazards, you must secure the original letters, and you must secure them this night."

"My own opinion," answered Frank, with an expression of keen pleasure, "but it will be a hard task to accomplish."

"It must be done," said the Judge, "and you must begin immediately. Mrs. Neville, committed by this marriage, will have every motive to defend herself and her husband. The testimony must be overwhelming. Now, the letterpress copies, without other proof, fix nothing. They might have been made by innumerable persons without the aid of the conspirators. Indeed, copies by the pen would be far more available for us, as we could then identify the handwriting. The originals we must have and have at once."

"But *how*, is the question," answered Frank, anxiously. "Where do you suppose the letters are?"

"You, a lawyer, and ask that question, Frank. What is the most secure place these plunderers could have for so valuable a depositum."

"Their safe, of course, and from their safe we must have them."

"You said John O'Brien, our old client, had the keys and the combination?"

"He has, sir; having been long confidential clerk. He is at present rooming in the building; he has everything in his trust."

"Then John O'Brien is your man. Find him and secure him."

"But the risk is fearful. Should we fail, we will be liable in damages and in imprisonment."

"Undoubtedly, my son; that I well know. I am most cautious until a crisis is reached, and then I feel no fear. We must go forward or fail. Only the bold are rewarded. Go to my friend, Judge Whitaker; procure on your affidavit a warrant of arrest for Risk, Planning and Slykes; take this to the Chief of Police and obtain from him two faithful men; find access to the building under their authority; secure John O'Brien, and get into the safe and take the letters. I will stand by you in every peril."

Pointing to the papers before him, he continued:

"Do you see this opinion? I expect to complete it this night. Now, when the clock strikes one, and I have written the last word, I wish that package of original letters to be on this table, here, just here, Frank," said the Judge, tapping the green cover with

his gold spectacles ; "on this very spot where you see me now striking."

The son was astonished and delighted by the shrewdness and boldness of his noble old father. His own faith and courage were stimulated, and his enthusiasm kindled into a blaze. Rising from his seat, he stood a moment before the venerable man, and then falling on his knees, with a tear in his eye, he exclaimed :

"Your blessing, sir."

The hand of the Judge was extended, silence ensued, and, with the gentle pressure on his head, Frank Livingstone experienced an increase of hope and of resolve. Indeed, he felt in himself the assurances of victory. Leaving his father's presence, he soon secured the writ and the two officers, and proceeded to the INTER OCEANIC RAILWAY DEPOT.

The edifice rose before him in its grand and stately proportions, visible in the light of the moon which, just bursting through a rift of a cloud, poured down her glory over wall and turret, and turned the glass of the roof into glancing gold, illuminating the marble statues of President Risk and Vice-President Planning standing high above Frank Livingstone.

He and the two officers stood before the door in a brief whispered conversation. When this was finished one of the latter gave a gentle tap on the window. This being unanswered he increased the force. Very soon a gruff voice within was heard asking,

"Who's there ?"

The elder officer replied, "Friends."

"What are your names?" inquired the voice, in a low, hesitating tone.

"I am Henry Clamp, Captain of this ward, and James Stout, my assistant, is with me, and also Mr. Frank Livingstone. We wish to see you on business."

There was a moment's pause, a bar was withdrawn. Then a key was heard turning in a lock. Lastly, bolts were unfastened at the top and bottom, and the door swung open.

John O'Brien, confidential clerk of the INTER OCEANIC RAILWAY, stood before them in the light of the moon.

"John," said Clamp, "we want to have a private talk with you in the chief office."

"I see no harm in that," answered O'Brien. Come along with me."

They entered. The door was shut and fastened, and the four men proceeded to the room. The gas was now turned up until the place was dimly lighted, and there, before Frank Livingstone, was the door of the huge safe, containing the treasure he so much desired.

"John," began Clamp, "I believe you know Mr. Livingstone."

"Oh, yes," replied O'Brien; "I have known him long and well, and have reason to remember him, since he once saved my life."

"John O'Brien is an old client of ours," said Frank, taking the man's hand. "Once, when unjustly accused, my father and I defended him, and saved him from the gallows."

"Thankful," answered O'Brien, with a beaming face and a tear in his eye, "am I and all my family to you both. But for you I would have swung sure, and disgraced my blood and left Bridget O'Brien a widow, and my boys and girls fatherless orphans in the world."

Clamp and Stout now took the clerk into an adjoining apartment to get from him what they wanted. They showed the warrants of arrest for Risk, Planning and Slykes, whom the man knew to be plundering knaves. It was a great advantage that he had confidence in the Livingstones, and that he had no confidence in his employers.

It was a long conference. Frank could hear the voices of the three men in earnest conversation. His chair was immediately before the door of the safe, and he sat looking at it. Shall it open? Shall he see the key inserted and hear it turn in its place, and then catch the glad sound of withdrawing bolt and swinging hinge? Shall he enter that dark, mysterious vault? Can it be possible that he will penetrate into the inmost recesses of the great corporation, and snatch his treasure from its most secure hiding place? It seems impossible to pass that grim barrier. He hears the tick of the large railway clock, and sees in the low light the motion of the hands, and remarks the measured swing of the brass pendulum. A solitary cricket utters an occasional chirp, and then the tooth of a mouse gnaws gently the floor. Now, as he sits in the visible gloom, he recalls the history of the past few months—the voyage on the *Britannia*, the faces of the

ladies, Lord Arlington, Colonel Oscar Neville and his frightful death on the wild billows; the scene of agony that followed; his efforts at discovery; the tragedy in Villont's den; the body of the mangled wretch; the marriage just witnessed, and the strange voice, even yet shrieking in his ears; the prostrate form of Mrs. Neville; the beauty of Lucy bending over; the appearance of Risk, and the two female fates sitting near him; his brief interview in the aisle of the church; his father's advice and blessing in the study—these and a thousand other events passed before him, pictured as in a moving panorama. Often his thoughts were interrupted by voices, now subdued, now rising, pleading, threatening, inquiring, answering, persuading—running through the whole marvelous gamut of human tone, and human purpose, and human feeling. Hours seem to pass. The clock struck eleven, and after a long interval rang out twelve, and still the voices continued, and the current of his thoughts rolled on and his mind seemed more vivid and vigorous than ever. A silence ensues. The argument is over. What settled the point he never knew. But O'Brien had yielded. He came from the room, took out his keys, turned the lock, pulled open the door, struck a match and lighted a lamp, passed into the safe, remained perhaps a minute, and returned, placing in the hands of Frank Livingstone a package of letters. Not a word was spoken, but the prize was none the less secure.

The four men proceeded to the door, and, after

thanks and good night, separated. In ten minutes Frank Livingstone was again in his father's study.

The Judge did not look at his son as he stood before him, but continued rapidly writing. His pen flew over his paper. Many minutes passed, still his pen flew. Minutes more elapsed. His pen flew faster. Frank could hear every scratch on the paper, and still his pen flew, until just as the clock struck one, the Judge stopped and said: "Frank, put that package down there, just there where I directed. My opinion is finished, the clock has tolled the hour and here are the letters. I have sought higher aid than yours or mine and I expected this result. Heaven has heard and given us the victory."

Frank, in an ecstasy of grateful joy, laid the package in the precise spot indicated.

Yes; there were the letters—the coveted letters, the original letters—letters from Mrs. Neville, from Lucy, from Lord Clare Arlington, from numerous friends—letters taken from the safe of the INTER-OCEANIC CONSPIRACY and fixing in characters of flame the brand of guilt on the infamous Risk, Planning and Slykes. The proofs were complete and escape was impossible. Arrest will follow. An examination showed that the sales of the Railway stocks, the proceeds from jewels and other property, and the amounts of the remittances, after deducting the sums allowed Mrs. Neville, exceeded half a million of dollars. This was clearly evinced by memoranda in the handwriting of Risk.

The Judge now took up a small envelope and

proceeded to open it. It was unsealed, and while in his hands there rolled out on the table a ring containing a magnificent diamond, whose brilliance, flashing in the light, startled them. Even in the gas-jet, it burned and flamed as if the volcanic fires stored in it during centuries were now blazing forth in glories proportionate to the cycles of their accumulation.

“Ha,” exclaimed the Judge, with a beaming and dilated eye, “what a jewel—fit for the brows of kings! It would not surprise me, if it proved some famous Indian celebrity! Examine it, my son!”

Frank took the ring and, glancing his eye within its circle of gold, said:

“I find inscribed here, ‘Oscar Neville to Emily Neville, Delhi, 1857!’”

“It is a sacred relic,” replied the Judge; “doubtless made precious by love and battle. Perhaps it was rescued by heroic valor from the flames of the old Mogul Metropolis, and placed by the hand of affection on the finger of beauty. Frank, I give it to your custody, and trust that before long you will be enabled to restore it to the delighted owner, and see it shine in her smile with a brilliance equal to that of your own hopes.”



CHAPTER XIV.

THE DIVORCE.



RS. NEVILLE had been carried insensible from the church to the house of Lyman Risk. She was thus spared all questions as to the choice of her residence. Lucy, of course, could only accompany her wronged and suffering mother, who was conveyed immediately from the carriage to her apartment. The agony of the terrible scene in the church was succeeded by the apathy of exhaustion, and she spent the night in slumber, but with interruptions from frightful dreams.

With the morning sun, the consciousness of her situation rushed upon her, so that the light was but a revival of her misery.

Throwing round her person a loose wrapper, and ordering her coffee, she reclined on a sofa near a window of the avenue.

The bright beams, trembling through the curtains, and glittering on the floor, seemed in mockery of her agony, and the glory of the creation was an aggravation of her distress. While Mrs. Neville was lying silent

and tearful she heard a gentle foot-fall. Opening her eyes, she saw the beautiful face of Midge. He stood like a statue with his arms folded awaiting her awakening. In his dark eyes and boyish face were the tokens of a kindred sorrow.

Midge, as we have seen, under the gracious care of the ladies, had developed like a flower transported from darkness and sterility to a place where all conditions of soil and air and light are favorable to bloom.

He was silent as a sunbeam, but as bright and as animating. Villont's stern Jesuitical discipline had taken out of him the joyousness of youth, but, under the culture of lovely women, he was growing morally and intellectually, and his life was becoming a lesson of quiet delight. He resembled an ideal of childhood in stone converted into flesh, and animated with a soul, yet gliding over the world in its living beauty as speechless as ever. In his young heart was a sorrow often bringing a tear to his eye, and a cloud over his face.

"What do you want, my little Midge?" said Mrs. Neville, with half-opened eyes, looking dreamily and languidly at the boy.

"I want you to forgive me, Mrs. Neville," replied the boy in a low voice, while the drops began to steal out from his eyes.

"Forgive you!" exclaimed Mrs. Neville, looking at him with awakened interest and surprise. "Why, Midge, you have never done me any wrong, nor can I conceive how you could harm me!"

These words cut into the heart of the boy, and from hidden springs let forth all the floods of his sorrows. He wept convulsively. He shook with the intensity of his feelings. It was plain that only a powerful cause could excite such a tempest.

Mrs. Neville saw that something important was in the moment. She was instantly aroused from the apathy of her exhaustion, and said:

“My little Midge, it will be better for you to tell me the whole truth.”

The boy began again and again, but was interrupted by his sobbings and his tears. Yet, from a word here and there, Mrs. Neville at last extracted from him the story of the letters and complicity of Slykes in the fraud, and she saw clearly that Risk and Planning must have been participators, if not the authors, of the whole infamous scheme. She was a dupe and a victim. The whole truth, like a flash of morning light, darted through her soul. First, she had been plundered; then married to her plunderer. How she thanked Heaven for that awful voice which had kept the villain from her arms!

So strange is the heart, and so inexplicable, that the certainty of the imposition, instead of crushing her, aroused her spirit. She arose from her sofa an Arlington again. Mrs. Oscar Neville stood forth in her own personality, awakened suddenly to a capacity for at least one stupendous act of courage. No human spirit could be more resolved.

The tempest was succeeded by a sudden composure

and command, which transfused themselves into Midge, and he became capable of answering her questions.

"Why, Midge," she began, "did not you tell me this before? You know how kind we have been to you, and I feel very badly to think you could have deceived and wronged us. Had you made this known before, oh, how much you might have saved me!"

"Oh, Mrs. Neville," he said, amid floods of grief; "my father threatened my life, and Mr. Slykes took me to his room, placed a pistol at each of my ears, and swore he would shoot me if I did not do as he directed, or if ever I told any one in the world. So, you see, I was afraid."

"I cannot blame thee, Midge," she said, with an infinite sadness, clasping her hands, and with a strong effort suppressing the rising weakness of her tears. "Thou wast the compelled and, therefore, guiltless agent of old and murderous villains, who shall yet be overtaken by the vengeance of Heaven; but, oh, what seas of agony I would have escaped; what pangs, what horrors unutterable, had I known what I have now gleaned from thee! Yet, on the other hand, I would have missed that deep knowledge of myself and that tenderness toward misery which have resulted from my sufferings."

After this soliloquy, Mrs. Neville inquired anxiously:

"Hast thou ever told this to another; if thou hast, I must know the truth."

"Oh, no, no, Mrs. Neville," answered the boy, sadly and eagerly. "I went once to his office to tell Mr.

Frank Livingstone, but he was not in, and so I never tried again."

"Why, my child, tell a stranger rather than myself, who am your friend?"

"Because," said Midge, "he was my father's lawyer, and when I sometimes went to his office he was kind to me, and he is good and rich, and every person loves him, and his father is a great Judge, and I thought it better to ask his advice."

"Enough, my little fellow! Thy answer shows thy heart was right, and thy intentions make me love thee, much suffering as thou hast caused us," replied Mrs. Neville, with a sigh. "Speak on this subject to no other person. I forgive thee. Go down stairs and await my call."

Mrs. Neville remained in a strange tranquillity. A fire was kindled which consumed the sources of tears, and when the flame subsided she was left strong as a volcanic rock. Now she is capable of great deeds. Her feminine weakness is overpowered by the invincible might of a conquering purpose.

Lucy had already informed her of the request of Frank Livingstone, whose name had been so strangely mentioned by Midge. She had been trying to recall his image, but found her memory wholly confused. Several hours passed in calmly revolving her plans when Midge brought her a card, saying, "Oh, Mrs. Neville, Mr. Frank Livingstone is here, and wants to see you. He is so good and kind and rich, and I know will be a true friend."

"Request him, Midge, to come here to my sitting-room, where we can be private, and do you remain in my bedroom, and come instantly when I ring my bell."

Mrs. Neville arose from her sofa, retired for a few moments, and returned with a pistol which she placed in a drawer of her stand.

A knock was heard, and, after her response, Frank Livingstone entered.

Her eye assisted her memory, and she recognized him as having been seen by her on the vessel.

"Sir," she said, extending her hand, "I could not recall you until I saw your face and person; now, however, that you are before me, my recollection grows distinct."

Taking her hand, Frank answered in a tone of the deepest respect:

"Madam, you are right. I was a passenger with you during your voyage on the *Britannia*."

"My little Midge," she replied, with a sad smile, "has just been speaking so loudly in your praise that he has quite prepared me for this interview. You will not hesitate to make freely any communication you may deem proper. Although my confidence has been so cruelly betrayed, I feel assured that I can trust you."

Frank Livingstone then related briefly his strange interest in the ladies, his efforts to discover them, his father's participation in his plans, their difficulties, perseverance, and final success in obtaining first the

copies and then the originals of all the letters between Mrs. Neville and her English friends.

She listened with absorbing attention, but without visible emotion. The fire was too deep to be seen on the surface. After long musing she suddenly and impetuously exclaimed:

"Pardon me, Mr. Livingstone; my mind was so engaged that I forgot the most sacred duty of my life. To you and your father my obligations are unspeakable. Your nobility and generosity have softened a heart which treacherous villains have nearly converted into rock. Oh, how I thank you both! My whole future life shall be a testimony to my gratitude."

"Madam," said Frank, with solemnity and manly directness, "we have only done what Heaven commanded as our duty. Our path seemed so plain that we had to walk in it. Besides, we have found ample reward in the acts themselves."

"But that, sir," she replied, "does not diminish my obligation. Such disinterested deeds are not common in the world, and they shed the only true light through its deep and awful darkness."

Pausing for a moment, and with a visible effort to preserve her control, she added:

"Can I see the letters?"

"Madam," said Frank, "if it be your wish, it is certainly your right. They are your exclusive property. I have brought them in this sealed package, and hereby restore them to their lawful owner. Some

of them we were compelled to read, but I trust that we never exceeded the bounds of delicacy and necessity."

He placed a bundle on the table before her, and untied the tape around it, then, removing the exterior wrappings, delivered the letters into her hands. She received them, held them for a moment, scrutinized them, and then, laying the package down, broke the seal and commenced reading. Not an emotion appeared on her face. A man of business could have perused with no less seeming surprise his ordinary morning mail. She looked through them all, and noticed especially the memoranda of Risk. When the examination was completed she said:

"Mr. Livingstone, I know that you will pardon me for thus absorbing myself from you. These letters, the testimony of Midge, and your own statements, make the conspiracy plain in all its vileness and monstrosity. Have you calculated the amounts these men have realized through their villainies?"

"Madam," answered Frank, "as far as my father and myself can calculate, not less than half a million of dollars in our currency."

"Has the INTER OCEANIC RAILWAY the means to pay such a sum?" she inquired with composure.

"Their circumstances are desperate, Madam," Frank answered. "Indeed, it is a bankrupt corporation. But they have just mortgaged their new depot and obtained money in other ways, so that now they happen to have an immense sum at their disposal, most prob-

ably with a view to bankruptcy, and for the benefit of a few principal officers."

At this intelligence there was a glance of fire in the eye of Mrs. Neville, and on her face the light of a conquerless determination.

"In what bank," she inquired, "is this money?"

"In the American Railway Bank, madam."

"Mr. Livingstone, have you a blank check?"

"Yes, madam," said Frank, taking out and opening his pocket-book, "one on that very bank."

"Now," she said, quietly, "oblige me by filling out the date on that check and making it payable to your own order for a half a million of dollars."

"I must willingly do what a lady commands," replied Frank, bowing and smiling, "although I can not see your object, and fear that the paper will be as valueless after as before."

"Still," she persisted, "I must ask you to comply with my request."

Mrs. Neville took a pen and an inkstand out of the drawer, and, placing them before Frank, he filled out the check and left it on the table.

"Thanks, Mr. Livingstone," she resumed; "many thanks for this and all your kindness! But I must bring myself under additional obligation. You notice my determined self-possession. It is given me for my work. Heaven has strengthened me for what is just before me. When I have accomplished the task assigned me, nature will assert herself and I shall long be confined as a sufferer, and, perhaps, be carried

to my grave. Should I attain my purpose, this money will be at your command, and I request you to provide for my illness, and to solicit your noble mother to have some care for my Lucy. I am sure that you will wish to complete the task you have so generously begun."

"Most gladly," replied Frank, with a manly and respectful cordiality. "Any wish you may express will be executed, if it be within the power of our family."

"Again," she said, "my thanks from a full and grateful heart. But once more I must trouble you. My name, Mr. Livingstone, my hated name. Tell me, oh, tell me, how can I be rid of it forever?"

"If you command us, madam, my father and myself can obtain an act of the Legislature, which will give you relief. Under the peculiar circumstances, we deem this better than application to our courts."

She clasped her hands as if delivered from a secret torture. A mountain of flame was lifted from her. Her eyes spoke the thanks she dared not trust to words. Frank never forgot that unutterable look. After this unexpected tempest of soul her previous self-command was restored.

"Mr. Livingstone," she resumed, "I am piling into heaven the mountains of my obligations. I thought I had finished, and now I make yet another request. The carriage shall be ordered to my door. Please remain in the drawing-room until you obtain, through Midge, my direction how to use it."

"Gladly, Mrs. Neville," exclaimed Frank, "will I comply with your request. One thing yet remains," he continued after a pause; "with the package of letters was a small envelope containing this diamond ring."

He took from his pocket the brilliant gem. Oh, how it gave back its splendors to that morning sun, flashing its light into the face of Mrs. Neville, who seemed kindled into an overpowering joy. She was speechless in the excess of her emotion, and unable to receive the jewel, which continued to sparkle in the hand of Livingstone. After a long pause, Mrs. Neville was capable of saying:

"Sir, words would be poor and unavailing in such a joy as mine. The intensity of my delight and gratitude is inexpressible. Next to my Oscar and my Lucy, that gem to me is precious. When it left my finger, my life went with it, and when restored, my life will return. My torn heart will now be healed. To testify what I feel, I will select you, sir, to perform the most sacred office possible to me, and which carries me back again to the spirit of my Oscar. I request you to place that ring on my finger."

She held down her hand, and extended her finger. Livingstone was on his knees in a moment. No knight of chivalry ever glowed more fervently in the presence of wronged and delivered beauty, than he, as he delicately placed on the fair finger the oriental brilliant, bestowed by affection, torn away by fraud, and now restored by a stranger, selected by Heaven

for the office. Livingstone soon after bade Mrs. Neville a respectful good-morning, and she was left to herself.

The ring on her finger ! The letters on the table ! What histories ! She gazed on them, and gazed and gazed, and continued to gaze, with feelings too deep for words, or tears, or acts, or anything but a motionless silence.

After many minutes of profound stillness she rang a bell. Its silvery tinkle was a relief and soon brought Midge to her side.

"Midge," she said, "tell Mr. Risk that I wish to see him at once in this room."

The boy departed and she was again alone. She drew on her gloves, removed the package from view, took the pistol out of the drawer, and thrust it into her wrapper pocket, placed the table in the middle of the room with a chair before it, laid on it the check, and near the pen and the inkstand, and then seated herself on the sofa.

Scarcely had these preparations been completed, when the door opened, and Risk slowly and reluctantly entered.

His hair was white as winter; his very beard was gray; and he had the aspect of a man snowed with sudden age. In his eye was an almost frenzied stare. It wandered, and then suddenly fixed itself on some image it was shaping. Risk, too, was bowed in form as with the weight of years.

Confronted with the woman he had wronged, he

dared not sit, but stood before her like a culprit awaiting doom.

Taking the pistol from her pocket, she cocked it and placed her finger on the trigger. Looking steadily in his face, she said slowly :

“Lyman Risk, we separate.”

These words seemed to call the wretch back to life. Instantly everything returned to him but the color of his hair, whose white contrasted with the momentary glow of his recovered manhood. He saw he was on the chasm's brink, and that his only hope was in the woman. Summoning his blasted energies, he exclaimed :

“I hope you will not think of this. Do not regard too much the occurrences of last evening. Those words were from the lips of a ventriloquising actress, who has sworn my ruin.”

“Painful and mortifying as was that scene,” she replied, “it makes no part of the reasons impelling me to my resolution.”

“Perhaps,” he suggested dubiously, “you may have heard of the embarrassments of our Railway, and our pecuniary difficulties may be affecting your mind.”

“Not in the least,” she said, with an imperious smile. “Poverty could never be sufficient ground for divorce, nor cause me to abhor an *honest* name.”

“Tell me your reasons,” he said, as if afraid she would comply with his request.

“Your name is odious,” she answered, with rising fierceness. “Risk, Risk, Risk ! A shriek in my ear ;

a blot on my life; a haunting ghost wherever I go. I despise it! I abhor it! Yelling in my ears since our marriage, I hear some devil scream, Risk, Risk! Mrs. Lyman Risk! This is torture."

Her words waked a fiend in the man. He glared on her like a tiger. Blood was in his eye and murder in his heart. But her look, as she stood with pointed pistol, subdued him. He cowered under her gaze.

"Come to the point, Mrs. Risk," he urged, "and let me know plainly and immediately what has changed your purpose."

"Call me by that hated name at your peril," she burst out with a terrible emphasis of indignation. "I will never hear it from you or any other person. I have overwhelming proofs of your villainy. All you have done is by fraud, and your marriage has no value before the law. Already I have taken measures to remove from my life this detestable stigma."

Risk flamed again into fury, and was only kept from violence by his own conscious villainy and her Arlington courage, which she was prepared to support by a pistol. He cried out.

"Beware! Hell is rising in me! I can scarcely keep my hands from your throat! You will drive me to desperation and murder. Persevere in this course, and we are ruined. Desist, and we may be happy."

"Never!" she replied, with all her energy. "Never, never! Your name I will never bear."

"Once you were glad enough to have it!" he cried, like a madman. "Do not repeat what you have said,

or I will not be responsible for the consequences. Law and muscle are on my side."

"But on my side are Justice and Heaven," she answered, with a noble dignity. "I am prepared for you. A bullet is swifter than your arm, and makes me superior to your brute force. A marriage, conceived and consummated by such fraud, is void before God and man. All the proofs of your infamy are in my hands. This is a sufficient explanation of my conduct. My sole wish in life is to be relieved of the disgrace of your name and have back that of my noble husband. To die called Risk would be the worst part of death—to have Risk on my coffin, like the torment everlasting."

"I cannot deny," he said, with a beseeching and apologetic tone, "that circumstances seem against me. But give me time for explanation. I implore you not to drive me to vengeance and despair."

"Ha! you beg!" she cried, with scorn. "You have committed the crime and would evade the penalty. No uncommon thing for culprits. You shall make restitution. Sign that check on the table for half a million of dollars or take the consequences!"

"And what, if I refuse," he roared forth, with all the recovered energy of his nature.

"Where were you last night, Lyman Risk?" she inquired, with a look piercing into his soul. "Why did you not claim your bride? Why were you not in your house? Why did I see you stealing here in the morning gloom like a guilty ghost? Because you

knew that you had obtained my hand by fraud and had none of the rights of a lawful husband. Where were you? What were you doing? Tell me, if you dare!"

Mrs. Neville knew not the import and effect of her own words. Risk shrieked, cowered and trembled. All the look of age came back to him in an instant, and he seemed bent and pitiable in his decrepitude. Holding his hands before his eyes, he averted his face as if to avoid some image of blood and horror. To him were visible two writhing shapes not seen by Mrs. Neville, who had unconsciously thundered into his guilty soul. He staggered and almost fell, and then, going in silence to the table, took the pen and signed his name to the check. Having done this, he placed his hands on his face, and, leaning on the desk, uttered a groan that seemed to come out of hell.

Mrs. Neville was touched with this extremity of suffering. But she could not leave her work half accomplished.

"Now," she said, with a commanding voice and dignity, "you must leave this house. I cannot go away until the divorce is procured and I will not live with you under the same roof. I must therefore say to you leave, and leave immediately."

The ruined wretch arose and looked around him with a blank and beseeching despair. Tottering through the door, he descended the stairs and left the dwelling. Mrs. Neville touched the bell for Midge, and sank down exhausted on her sofa.

CHAPTER XV

INTER OCEANIC DEPOT CONFLAGRATION.



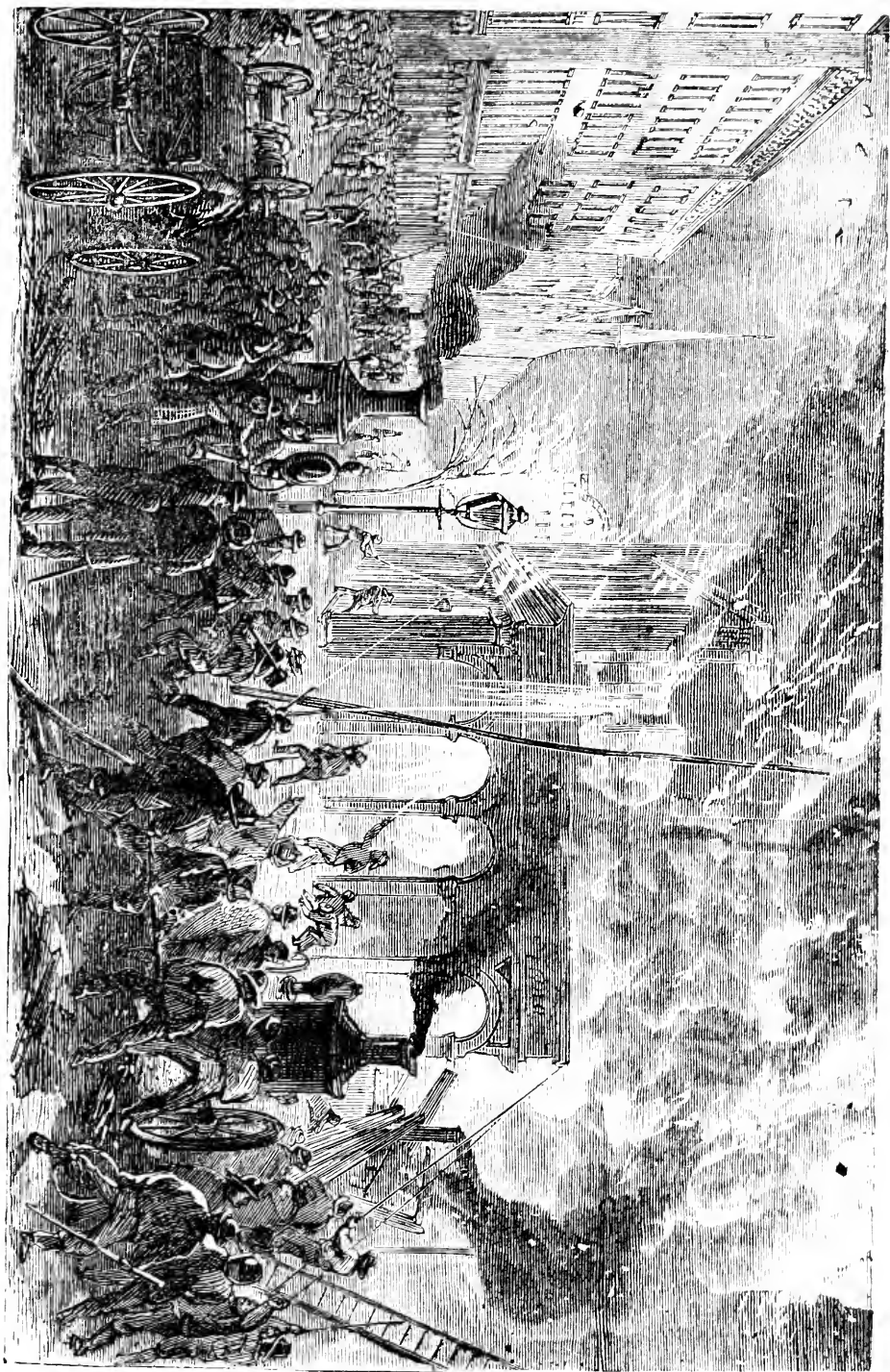
N his departure from his home. Lyman Risk proceeded at once to his apartments in the INTER OCEANIC DEPOT. Planning and Slykes, by a species of sympathetic instinct, had also taken refuge there, so that the three confederates found themselves living together at the chief center of their business and their power. Indeed, the place and a desultory life were most in harmony with the tastes and habits of the men who appeared to be reduced to their proper position and dimensions. Their palatial homes were, after all, not suitable for their residences.

When Risk was first seen by his friends, they were astounded by his changed appearance, and especially at the color of his hair.

"Why, Lyman," burst forth Slykes, in amazement, "what's the matter, old fellow? What has happened to you? Your hair's white as cold steam on a frosty morning."

"Stop your nonsense, Sam," said Risk, peevishly. "I am in no mood for such talk and I won't stand

"The Inter-Oceanic Railway Depot was a ruin."
Barnes, 375



it. We are in great danger. It's no time for jokes."

"But it's a fact, old boy. You're like a gooseberry bush in an October snow. What's done it? Frightened white by wedding music! At this rate, you'll be bald as a brass cylinder in a month."

"You're a fool, Slykes, and I'll have none of this," Risk replied, suddenly rising and ready to strike his friend to the floor.

"But," interposed Planning, "Sam is right, Lyman. You should not be angry in this way. We have enough to do without fighting each other. The change is remarkable, and the sooner you know it the better. Step to the glass."

He had not seen himself in a mirror since the dreadful occurrences we have related. A glance at his image struck horror to his soul. He saw not Lyman Risk, but a bowed old man, with a hoary head, a white beard, and cheeks sunken and ghastly. The sight was so appalling that he sank down on a chair with a groan, and lifted his hands before his eyes, which were staring at some spectacle of terror to others invisible. He sat for some minutes in a profound and despairing silence, which made his friends speechless in his presence. Suddenly arousing himself, Risk cried:

"Brandy, Coolie, for Heaven's sake, brandy!"

The bottle was brought, and he drained glass after glass, until his nerves were strengthened, without producing the slightest intoxication. Under ordinary circumstances, he would have been fevered and frenzied

by such potations. Rallying himself with a prodigious effort, he said :

"Now to business. Our affairs are in a most dangerous condition. We will sit around this table and discuss the situation."

The three confederates seated themselves in their accustomed places, and began to talk as usual. In their most serious affairs had always been mingled jokes and jollities. Before coming to the perils of the hour, Planning, attempting to excite his President to greater cheerfulness, said, in a bright and bantering tone :

"Lyman, you look blue as well as white. Your honeymoon showing horns already! Pushing you out of your own house! Rather soon for such a tumble."

"Coolie," he replied, fretfully, "I am sore on that subject ; I do not wish you to name it."

Planning was not to be so easily baffled. Before getting under the shadow of their troubles, he determined to evoke a flash of good humor, and, turning to Slykes, said :

"Then I'll take my fun out of Sam. He, too, is in the dumps. Failed to make up his matrimonial losses! Can't get another cylinder, my locomotive widower! Like a broken engine waiting for repairs! Long time before you're mended and on the road again."

"I confess, Coolie, I feel black as a furnace when the fire's out," said Slykes, for the first time showing despondency. "Not Widdership, but the INTER OCEANIC

bothers me. Stocks depreciated, bonds worthless, credit tumblin', debts pressin', rollin' stock ruined, track shaggy, bridges shaky, engines crazy, workmen grumblin', shops shut and mobs along the line—folks now on streets hootin' at us! INTER OCEANIC must soon be busted and fragments flyin' all over this planet."

"Bad enough," Planning answered, with an assumed hopefulness of courage; "but we will work on and work ever, and in the end conquer. By mortgaging our depot to old Pilkilson, and taxing all our other resources, I have succeeded in placing a million in the bank, which Lyman Risk can draw on at any moment. Not so bad, Mr. President."

"A lie, Coolie, an infernal lie," roared Risk, in desperation.

"What do you mean, Lyman?" said Planning, outraged and disgusted. "This language to me! You must be crazy."

"I am crazy, and I will be crazy," screamed Risk, frantically. "My hair's white and my hands are red, and I see what you don't. It's a lie, a ruinous lie."

Planning was astounded and alarmed in earnest. He said, almost beseechingly:

"Lyman, you must stop this! I hope you will not give me the lie again. This must lead us all into trouble. I deposited the money myself, and here is my bank book to show it."

"And I drew out a half a million," shrieked Risk, wildly. "I have married the devil, and she made me sign the check with a pistol at my head. It was

made payable to Frank Livingstone's order, and he got the money. It's a hot spike to swallow, and it's burning me through and through."

"Who'd've thought it of you, Lyman Risk?" cried Sam Slykes, with his hands in his pockets, and his head thrown back in utter wonder. "Crazy as a locomotive, steam hissin', throttle valve open, engineer tumbled off, and flyin' along a precipice with death waitin' below in the waters. INTER OCEANIC bust up, and president gone mad."

"Yes, mad, Sam; raving mad," yelled Risk, in fury. "Three she hell-cats have ruined me! They screech in my ears! They show their teeth and claws! They glare at me with red eyes! Blood is on their lips, and they are screaming to gnaw my heart. I'm mad, and I have a right to be mad, and I'll be more mad yet, and curse the man who denies it."

Risk rose from his seat as he spoke, and, for the moment, looked a maniac. His confederates placed their hands on his shoulders, and, by soothing tones and cheerful words, sought to allay the fire and tempest of his soul.

"Take heart, Lyman," said Slykes, slapping him on the back in a rough, good-natured way. "We'll stick to each other and to the train while there's a tie on the track, or a screw in the engine."

"Yes," said Planning, with a look of determined courage, "we'll stand together. If we go down, we'll sink from the same last plank into the bottom of the sea. I'll telegraph at once to the American Railway

Bank to transfer our remaining half million to London, and then we'll burn our books, and let the stockholders whistle for their dues and shares."

"But," said Risk, with despair in his tones, "we can't get our books. I have lost the keys of the safe, and forgotten the combination."

"Worse and worse," cried Planning.

"Like losing the lever that works the throttle valve," said Slykes, with a momentary cloud on his face.

"Send for John O'Brien," rejoined Planning, cheerfully. "He has the keys and combination; send for him at once."

A messenger was dispatched. In the meantime, the confederates procured another bottle of brandy and a box of cigars, and sat for many minutes drinking and smoking in silence and gloom. Risk often started, groaned and held his hands before his eyes. The tick of the great clock sounded loudly, as if tolling out some coming doom. At last, the messenger arrived, and reported that O'Brien had not been seen during the day at his house or the depot, and it was rumored that he had left the city.

This struck a chill into every heart. The silence became deeper, and the face of Risk more wild and maniacal. After a long stillness, Planning began:

"I fear this means trouble. That infernal letter package, Lyman, is my dread. An open keg of dynamite in that safe, with the thermometer at blood-heat, wouldn't give me such anxiety. O'Brien's absence

means treachery. Those letters in the hands of our enemies will land us in the penitentiary."

"Stripes on our garments sure as brass-bands round a cylinder," said Slykes. "We'll manufacture locomotives yet for the benefit of the public."

"Shoot me, Slykes," cried Risk, frantically. "Stab me, Coolie! Strike me dead, and make me happy. I can't stand it any longer. I have brought this trouble on you. Since the English women came from Boston, we have been driving on to ruin. Lyman Risk has murdered the INTER OCEANIC, and sees blood and fire. Kill him! kill him! kill him now!"

Having spoken these words, the wretch fell back, exhausted by his own frantic violence.

While Risk was in a stupor, and even Slykes benumbed, Planning was stimulated into new energy. He realized the importance of destroying the perilous package. A doubt haunted him. He feared its abstraction, and that it would rise up a witness against himself and his friends. Mechanics were sent for, and the room was filled with the jingle of keys and the ring of hammers. These were followed by the smell of powder. Planning stood over the men, suggesting expedients and stimulating exertion. Hours of labor ensued. Noon had long passed and evening approached. The efforts had been frantic—pounding, cutting, boring, sawing, filing, twisting, exploding. Little effect had been produced. There stood the grim custodian in its iron strength, defying the men who made it, and refusing to yield its treasures.

Planning ordered an enormous charge of powder. A long train was laid. There was the click of a match, the application of the flame, and a low, thunderous sound, with the vibrations of an earthquake. The vast edifice trembled to its foundations. Windows were shattered, the wall was bulged out, and around were marks of prophetic ruin. But the safe was torn open. The door hung down on one hinge, the sides were grim and blackened, and the vault was filled with the smoke and odor of powder.

Planning lighted a lamp and stepped over the wreck into the dark passage. He examined every thing. Drawers were opened. Books, papers, bundles, were searched. The examination was a failure. Not an English letter was to be found. Planning emerged from the gloom and even his spirit began to sink. Returning to his confederates, he said :

“Our search has been vain. The package is gone and we must prepare for the worst. It is now evening and we had better dismiss the workmen, lock and bolt the doors, and secure ourselves against attack. The mob will be on us, and I have prepared for our escape.”

Nor was Planning a moment too soon. The sound of the explosion had startled the city. It had also been rumored that the INTER OCEANIC deposit of a million had been withdrawn from the bank, and the people knew that this signified the wreck of the corporation and the loss of their stocks and debts. The unpaid workmen of the Railway were specially furious

Already the mob was collecting, and bonfires were blazing in the streets, and casting their glare into the windows and over the walls of the Depot. Planning rose with the occasion and showed an unconquerable spirit. He cried :

“No hurry, boys ! I have provided a way of escape through a vault of our cellar. Before we leave, we will have the dainties of the season and I’ll make you a speech. I was born an orator and the light of these fires is kindling my genius. Sam, go to that closet, bring out the champagne and the eatables, and don’t forget the box of Havanas.”

The table was soon spread and the bottles uncorked, and even Risk began to partake of the cheer and join in the desperate merriment.

Mounting a chair in the wildness of his exhilaration, Planning cried :

“Now, boys, for my speech. Hear the American Demosthenes, who ought to be thundering in the Senate instead of a Railway Depot. My theme : *DIVORCE* and *KEROSENE* ! Young people in this country, like Lyman, marry for the honeymoon, and that over, separate by *Divorce*. If an old fellow would send away his aged companion, *Divorce* brings a blooming maiden to his arms. When men and women would exchange wives and husbands, *DIVORCE* does the business. Mr. President, *DIVORCE* will make you happy, and if it don’t, then try *KEROSENE*. *KEROSENE*, in America, is a popular remedy for pecuniary diseases. When a man is near protest and has his house insured,

KEROSENE saves his credit. If his policy is large on ship and cargo, and he can't scuttle, the next best thing is KEROSENE. Even the marriage tie, Lyman, can be dissolved by KEROSENE, if you can fasten the woman in the building before it burns. KEROSENE, therefore, is comfort to the afflicted, a preventive of bankruptcy, a savior of credit, and a friend to all classes except the rascally Insurance companies who deserve their losses. And KEROSENE, gentlemen, will increase the last and brightest glory of the INTER OCEANIC RAILWAY."

As the champagne began to have effect, Risk and Slykes grew boisterous in their mirth.

"Go it, Coolie," cried the latter; "go it, like a train afire. You were meant for one of Uncle Sam's syrup-soothers. You could sugar-coat the old fellow's pills, and steal from his pockets while he thanked you for it."

"DIVORCE and KEROSENE!" screamed Risk. "That's what we want! They'll cure Lyman Risk! Flames! I say, Flames! Hurrah for Coolie! Hurrah for Sam! Hurrah for Lyman Risk! Hurrah for Divorce! Hurrah for Kerosene! Hurrah for Hell! Fire will burn out blood! Hurrah for Fire!"

And while he shouted, the wretch also leaped and danced in the red glare of the flames whose rising brightness flashed from the street below through the shattered windows.

"Now," exclaimed Planning, with a voice of command, "This fire below isn't fast enough. Sam, go

to that closet! Take out those bottles! Pile up the books and papers of the INTER OCEANIC! Soak them well with kerosene! Pour it over that balustrade! Let it run down along the halls! Don't be sparing! Old Pilkilson pays the bills!"

Slykes obeyed. The kerosene had been amply provided. Bottle after bottle was flung down the stairs and broken over the floors until the place became slippery and almost unendurable by its odors.

"All done as you ordered, Coolie," cried Slykes. "You're conductor of this train now, and she'll burn well, I'll tell you. A blazing INTER OCEANIC bridge won't be a candle to this Depot."

"Here's a match," yelled Risk, as he pulled open his box. "I'll touch the oil. The President kindles the fire and makes flames, flames, flames."

"Hold on, Lyman," said Planning, "till I make a speech from the window. When I finish, apply your match and we'll run for the vault. Hear their yells! Pilkilson sits in his carriage! The Livingstones are in theirs. Curse them all! Ha! Old Pills, you gave us the money on the mortgage. Your policy expired yesterday, and this building burns at your expense. He looks at me! Good! He grits his teeth! Better! He shakes his fist! Best! A race for our lives! They rush for the door! Now they pound it! Touch your match, Lyman! All right! We'll soon be safe! Good-by, DEPOT! Your smoke will ascend to heaven, where we don't expect to meet it."

Lyman Risk obeyed Planning's command. As they

ran down the stairs and lifted the stone from a concealed vault, and replaced the covering, the flames burst along the halls and out from the windows of the lofty edifice. The mob, in affright, ceased their blows and retired to a distance.

So effectual had been the work of the incendiaries that efforts to suppress the fire were seen to be useless. Crowds stood around in the glare, gazing with a dumb and paralyzed wonder. Night had come. Fanned by the winds, the flames roared and leaped with thunderous sounds toward the lurid clouds, illuminating for miles the city and country.

The building was one sheeted blaze. Soon the fury of the conflagration subsided; the flames sank, the roof and pillars and walls tumbled through the fire and smoke, and the INTER OCEANIC RAILWAY DEPOT was a ruin.



CHAPTER XVI.

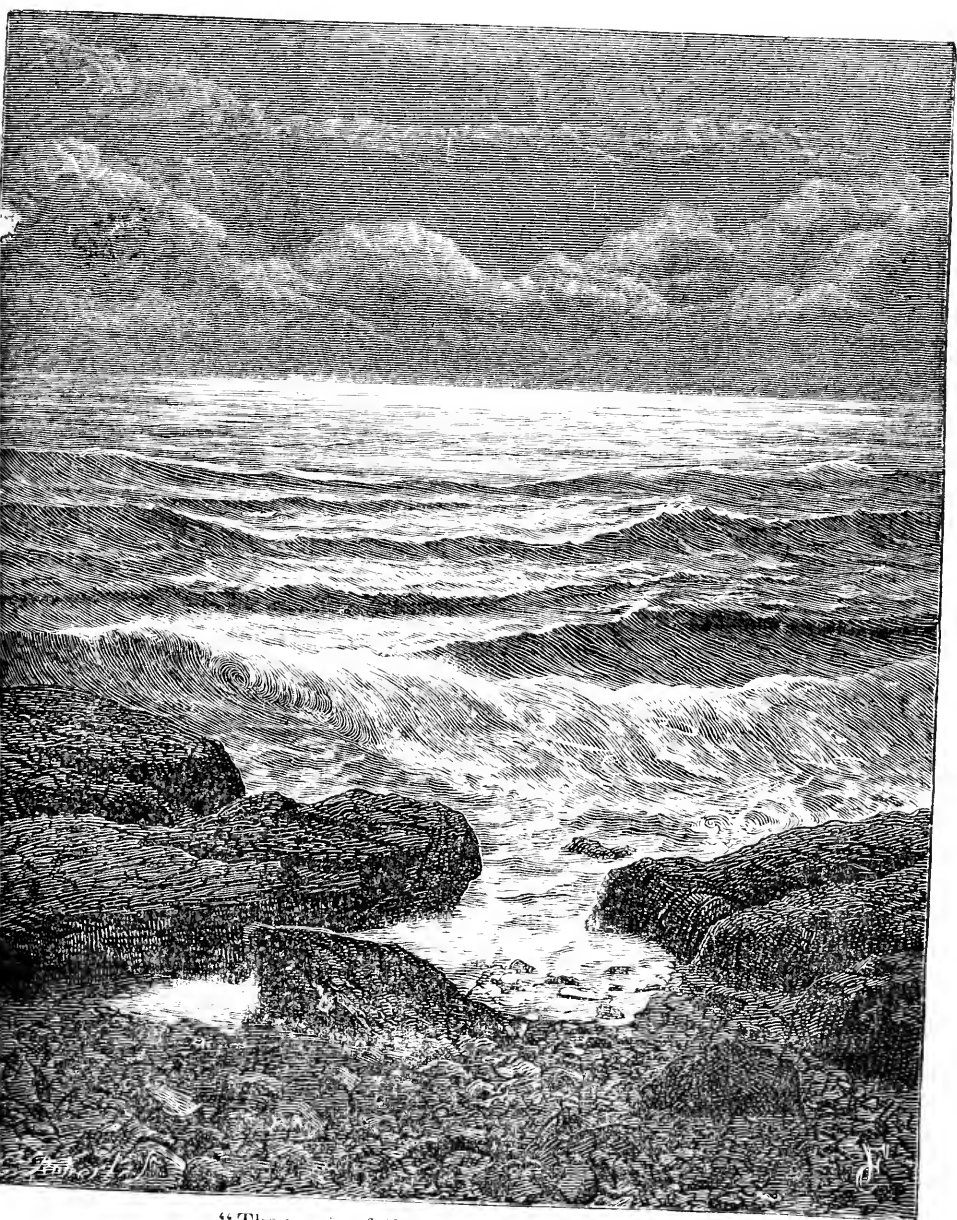
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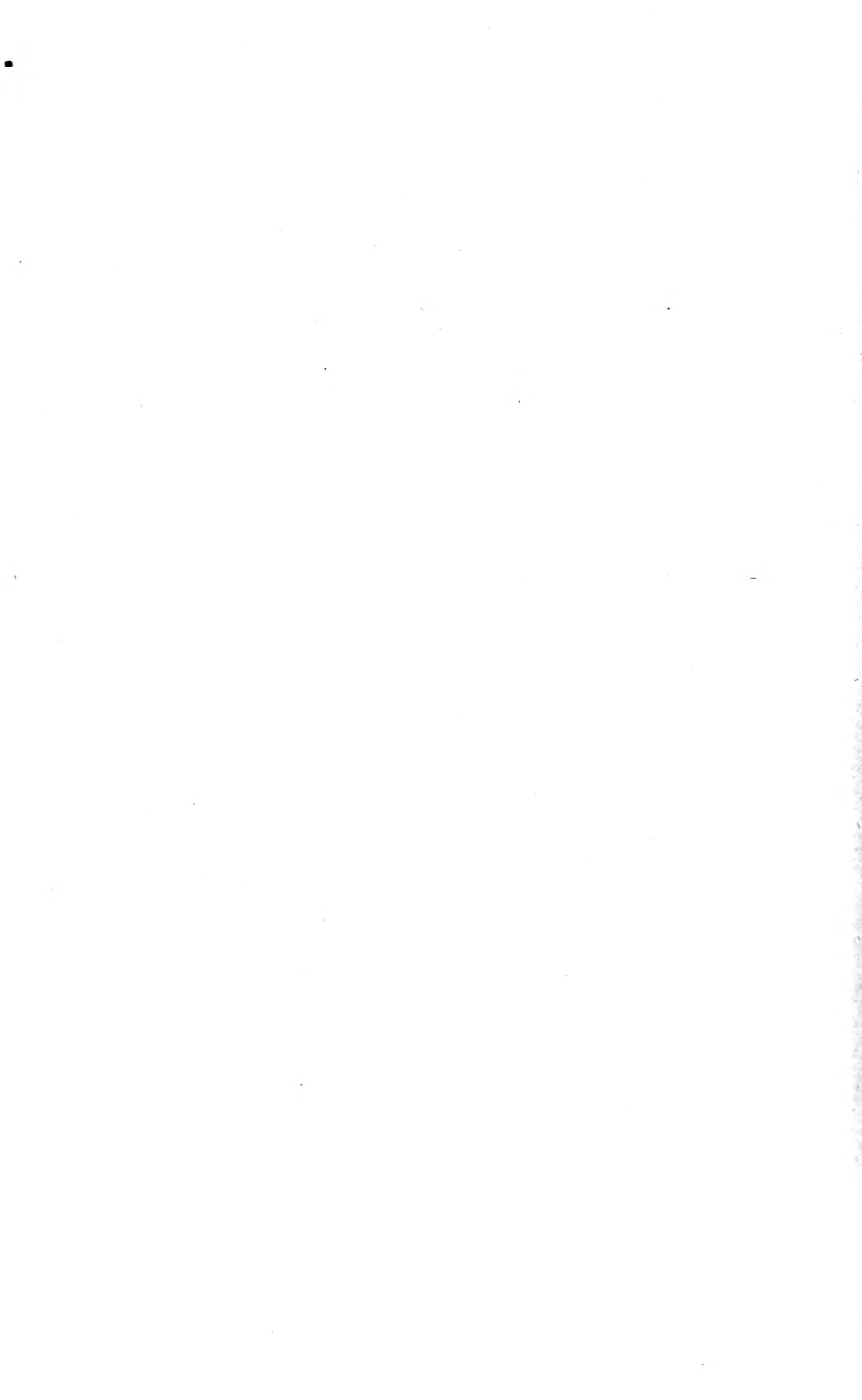
RS. NEVILLE, after the excitements we have described, long remained insensible. She was found by Lucy where she had fallen after the expulsion of Risk. A physician was called, and all the skill of the medical art brought into requisition. But nature was exhausted by the trials of many months, culminating in the terrible scenes we have depicted.

At the suggestion of Frank Livingstone, his mother called and offered to Lucy her services, which were gladly accepted by the lonely and friendless girl. After the acquaintance had ripened and the divorce had been secured, it was deemed advisable that Mrs. Neville should be removed from a place which would recall so much suffering.

When she had gained sufficient strength, under the careful superintendence of the physician, she was finally conveyed to the house of Judge Livingstone, and Lucy, of course, had to accompany her mother. Nothing could be more wonderful than this sudden change from the power and presence of enemies to a home among devoted and congenial friends. Even



“The music of the sea came to her ears.”
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while insensible to external things, Mrs. Neville seemed to revive under these favoring influences.

Weeks passed before the powers of nature could be visibly rallied. Soul and body had been under the greatest conceivable strain. Not only had the mind been torn and the heart lacerated, but fierce passions had been aroused, which left behind them the agitations of the tempest. Weeks of unconsciousness were the only conditions of recovery.

Mrs. Livingstone was incessant in her attentions to the suffering lady, whose eyes, when first opened, beheld this new and faithful friend. By degrees Mrs. Neville was made acquainted with the change of her situation, and when she became able to converse, an intimacy commenced between the ladies which was to endure while they lived.

After her strength was sufficiently restored, she was conveyed to the villa on the Hudson, and thence taken to Saratoga. Finally, it was advised by the physician that she should try the virtues of Newport, and in this most charming place she rented a beautiful cottage adjoining to that of the Livingstones. Lucy Neville soon became acquainted with all the members of the family. She and Edna were drawn together by a similarity of years and tastes, and their intercourse bloomed into an enthusiastic friendship. While the Judge and Mrs. Livingstone were warm in the praises of the fair English girl, we need not record how Frank felt and acted under the circumstances.

At Newport, Mrs. Neville rapidly recovered. She

declared that no place in Europe was more lovely, and no society more attractive. The sea was magic in its influence, soon bringing back into her cheek its English bloom. Also the consciousness that she was once more among cultured and refined people, soothed and healed her lacerated spirit.

Sitting on a rock beneath her cottage, Mrs. Neville would gaze silently for hours over the ocean toward her native land. While thus engaged, one morning shone on her with a peculiar loveliness. The music of the sea came to her ears in the waves murmuring on the sands at her feet, and in the louder roar of the breakers dashing their foam against an opposite crag. In the heavens, the sun poured down a cloudless but softened splendor. The blue of sky and sea gave intense whiteness to the gliding sails, and all around were sounds and scenes which breathed into her a mild and healing comfort. Her heart melted, and her eyes suffused, and all the bitterness of the past faded out of her in the purifying joy of that memorable hour. She was long absorbed in her meditations, when she heard a gentle foot-fall, and, lifting her eyes, saw Mrs. Livingstone, who, fearing intrusion, began to withdraw, but was earnestly requested to remain.

"Pardon me, Mrs. Neville," she exclaimed, as she stood ready to retire, "I had not intended to disturb you in this secluded place. Indeed, I did not know that you were here. Let me return to the cottage, and leave you once more alone."

"By no means, Mrs. Livingstone," she replied, with an affectionate cordiality, "I was this moment thinking of you. Take a seat beside me, and we will converse on a subject of mutual interest."

Mrs. Livingstone accepted the invitation, and the ladies were soon absorbed in each other.

"It is strange," began Mrs. Neville, "that in all my trials I have scarcely ever thought of my own country. My sufferings were so intense, that my mind was always occupied by the present anxiety or the coming agony. The spectacle of the sea has recalled Old England. My heart throbs with love, and yon wide expanse connects me with my native shore."

A tear dropped from her eye and rolled down her cheek.

"I can understand perfectly what you mean," answered Mrs. Livingstone. "Oh, as you look over this ocean, how lovely to your view must be the scenes you have left behind, and, towering over all, grand old Arlington Castle."

"Yes; images of England, fresh and fair, rise before me with the vividness of pictures. But, sad to reflect, that of the four persons who left Arlington, one is in the depths of yonder sea, and the other lies embalmed in his coffin to be transported over its treacherous waves."

These words awakened a storm of grief only controlled by the severest effort. When the violence of her feelings had subsided, Mrs. Livingstone said:

"We alone seem gainers by your misfortunes, since

they have brought to us friends who will live in our hearts during all the changeful scenes of our mysterious earthly existence, and we trust afterwards and for ever."

"Yes, oh, yes," exclaimed Mrs. Neville, embracing Mrs. Livingstone, and weeping profusely; "Heaven gave you to us as our deliverers. While villains were plotting our ruin you were planning our rescue. I know nothing more wonderful than the invisible spell which drew you to strangers, and urged you forward under so many obstacles, and, at last, so signally and triumphantly accomplished your benevolent purposes. Eternity will not suffice to express our gratitude. Your noble husband and son appeared to be selected and inspired in their generous efforts by the everlasting love and wisdom."

"We found our pleasure," answered Mrs. Livingstone, glowing with joy, "in the deed itself, and are more than rewarded by our recollections of it, and our delight in finding such true and worthy friends."

"Do you know," inquired Mrs. Neville, looking up with a hesitating expression, "that the tie which is to unite us in the future may be closer than any we have yet named? I presume you understand what I mean."

"Surely," replied Mrs. Livingstone, with pain and embarrassment, "my son has not added to the trials of your situation! His heart has certainly been exposed by his conduct; but I cannot believe that his lips would express what, under the circumstances,

would be extremely indelicate and improper. I believed that he would restrain himself, at least, while you were under our roof."

"And he did show the very delicacy to which you allude," said Mrs. Neville, "by not mentioning the subject while we were your guests. You forget that we are now in our own cottage."

Mrs. Livingstone was indeed relieved by this suggestion.

"Still," she replied, "it might have an appearance of turning to his advantage obligations you seem to be under, and thus placing yourself and your daughter in a situation of extreme embarrassment. I did not suppose that he could be guilty of so thoughtless a precipitancy."

"Nor has he been," said Mrs. Neville, firmly. "He has a true and noble nature, and has shown in every way a manliness even his careful mother must approve. Lucy and he are formed for each other, and I believe that Heaven intends and will approve their marriage."

"But may there not be insuperable difficulties in the way?" asked Mrs. Livingstone, anxiously. "Frank is an American citizen, Lucy must reside in England. Questions also of property and succession may arise which will make interminable trouble."

"I think not," replied Mrs. Neville, thoughtfully. "True love levels mountains. The mingling currents of the affections sweep away all obstacles. You will find that apparent difficulties will adjust themselves, and in the end prove helps and encouragements."

"Then you give your consent cheerfully and without reserve?" inquired Mrs. Livingstone, rising. "And your approval is not enforced by your obligations, but flows out freely from both your heart and your judgment."

"I have no doubt and no hesitation," said Mrs. Neville. "I have been sitting here to reflect on the request, and I not only approve it, but it delights me. No knight of chivalry ever more gallantly won his lady-love, and he deserves her as a reward of his labor and courage, while she feels an affection as true and as ardent as his own. To him we owe all we have, and are, and expect to be, and to enjoy, in the future of our lives. The debt cannot be cancelled, but we will do what is in our power toward its discharge."

There, on that ocean shore, with the sea and the land and the sky as witnesses, the ladies again embraced, and the houses of Arlington and Livingstone were united in their clasping arms. After this exchange of tokens and pledges of affection, and alliance they resumed their seats, and, after a long pause, Mrs. Neville remarked:

"I am just beginning to comprehend something of the meaning of my trials. Since the death of my brother, Lord Clare, the Arlington estates pass to me as the only surviving heir, and I believe I have been disciplined for the trust."

"Will you explain," asked Mrs. Livingstone, "in what particular way; if, indeed, I may be permitted

to inquire. Perhaps, I may be intruding on thoughts and feelings too sacred for another."

"Not at all," answered Mrs. Neville, warmly; "on the contrary, my heart will find relief in pouring itself into your own. The dreadful scenes of blood and famine in India hardened my soul, and long separation from my Oscar made me bitter and cynical. When he returned, I was so filled with the idolatry of my love, that I became insensible to the claims and sufferings of others. My trials have melted my heart. The woes of others now wake the tear in me. I shall live henceforth to mitigate human misery, and I shall have leisure and money for my charitable plans. This seems to be the meaning of what I have endured."

Mrs. Livingstone, with deep feeling, said :

"Surely a fountain has been opened by your sorrows, whose streams are preparing to flow forth in blessings to thousands. Bright and healing may be the waters! Long may you live to enjoy the exquisite pleasure of shedding light and love over this dark world."

As she concluded these words, Judge Livingstone was seen standing on the shore of the ocean, and gazing, with his glass, keenly over the blue waters. Noticing the ladies, he closed his telescope and came over the sand toward them. As he drew near, he exclaimed, in his gay, cheerful voice :

"Mrs. Neville, I thought you might like to see once more the flag of old England. I have been trying to make out that ship, which, I believe, belongs

to the British navy, and flies from her mast-head the ensign of St. George."

Adjusting his glass, and gazing long, in silence, he, at last, took it from his eye, saying:

"And I am right! Behold the banner of your country!"

Mrs. Neville, trembling with emotion, seized the telescope, and looked, and looked, until her eye moistened and her bosom heaved. It was, indeed, an animating spectacle. Yes! there, above that splendid ship, in the light and breeze of the brilliant morning, floated, bright and free over the sea, the flag of England.

The joy of Mrs. Neville was inexpressible. She felt kindling within her a renewed desire to return to the land she loved, and to begin the work to which she proposed devoting her fortune and her life. Filled with these thoughts, she gave Judge Livingstone the glass, and asked, somewhat abruptly, a question, suggested by a previous conversation:

"Judge, let me inquire what, in your opinion, is the missing link between the extremes of society."

"Sympathy," he responded, instantly and emphatically.

"Is that all?" she inquired, anxiously.

"In my opinion, all," he replied, firmly.

"But will you not explain yourself more fully?" she asked, gazing intently into his face.

"That requires a speech," he answered, with his animating laugh; "and what an Englishman most hates

is an American speech. Johnny Bull's idea of Uncle Sam is a talkative bore, with brass in his face, a twang in his nose, his cigar in his mouth, and his hands in his pockets."

"And my conception of him," replied Mrs. Neville, with a gay smile, "is an American Judge, whose heart is full of kindness, and whose lips are full of wisdom."

"Enough, enough!" said the Judge, taking off his hat and bowing gallantly. "Such a compliment may make my remarks longer than your patience."

"Beware," interposed Mrs. Livingstone, "how you encourage Mr. Livingstone. Should he begin on this subject, do not expect luncheon until late in the afternoon; perhaps, not until time for dinner, and remember that this sea-air whets the appetite."

"But my curiosity is aroused," answered Mrs. Neville. "There is an intellectual as well as a physical appetite which is to be satisfied. So I will take the risk and ask the Judge to explain how sympathy is the missing social link."

"I will commence," said the Judge, "like Plato, Socrates and Uncle Samuel, by asking a question. Did you ever see, madam, the black and ruined walls of the Tuileries and the Hotel de Ville, in the beautiful city of Paris?"

"I know nothing sadder, Judge," she answered, "and I have often stood before them awed and solemnized by my reflections."

"And did you ever observe," he continued, "the

hard, and selfish, and repulsive face of Louis the XIV. in the pictures and statues of France?"

"I have more than once studied it," she said, "on wall and pedestal. Especially at Versailles was I chilled and repelled by the countenance of the ambitious tyrant. But what connection between the face of the monarch and the ruins of the palaces?"

"Closer than you imagine," the Judge replied, with a thoughtful expression. "The face of the king is like his selfish and oppressive reign, whose wars and luxuries, followed by the vices and the feebleness of his successors, made the condition of France insufferable. Had that royal family always been kind and just and wise, would the torch of revolution have consumed the monuments of the country? Never! When Love holds the sceptre, Sovereigns rule with an unquestioned sway. Witness your own Victoria! She lives in the affections of her people, and hence the throne of England, during her reign, will be firm as the mountain rocks. If the people are tigers, mouthed in blood, they must be shot like tigers; but it is not surprising that they sometimes tear the kings who make them tigers. Sympathy melts down the social barriers. Any government, monarchy or republic, is secure with it, and no government is secure without it, and through it must be accomplished all the good possible from class to class. But remember, it must not be that simulated feeling, which is but the offspring of condescending selfishness."

"But do you suppose, Judge, that *sympathy* will



"The face of the King is like his selfish and oppressive reign."
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revolutionize governments, reduce all classes to the same condition, and make a utopia of social equality?"

"Not even Dynamite," answered the Judge, smiling, "will level the hills and mountains of our humanity. Many of the distinctions of society are indestructible by physical, intellectual or moral forces. They arise from the diversities of human gifts and opportunities, and should the world be reduced to an instant monotony, inherent aptitudes and affinities would speedily restore the old differences. Society but repeats the everlasting order, visible throughout the universe. In air, earth, ocean, how innumerable the varieties in sentient life! Each flower has its peculiar beauty, and each star its peculiar glory. Social diversities are ineradicable. You can no more prevent them than you can obliterate the sexual distinctions between man and woman. Dynamite and our masculine feminines war against the eternal ordinations of the Almighty. Such is the teaching of common sense and Scripture. All schemes of good must be based on facts, not on fancies. Utopias soon dissolve. Fraternity is in the *heart*. There are tyrants in hovels as well as in palaces. Love is man's leveler. Love is the bond of society. Love is the sole democrat. Sympathetic love, shown in kind and unobtrusive looks, and words, and deeds, when pervading the educated classes, will diffuse itself through the whole social mass as surely as the rains on the mountain top gush forth into springs and gather into streams, thus irrigating and fructifying our world. Good-morning, ladies," he concluded, with a bow, "and

please see that it is not you instead of I who will bring our luncheon late in the afternoon."

Waving his hat, the Judge retired with a merry ring in his laugh, and left the ladies to continue the conversation. After a long pause, Mrs. Neville resumed:

"Judge Livingstone has touched the deepest springs of my being, and revealed me to myself. I perceive that I never had any true sympathy. My whole soul centered in itself. All my actions revolved about myself. No wonder the poor who received my charities detested the hand bestowing them. I felt I was an Arlington. I spoke like an Arlington. I acted like an Arlington. The Arlington pride was the poison-drop in all I did. Yes; he is right! he is right! Sympathy is the key to the human heart and the bond of human society."

"When Mr. Livingstone and myself began life," said Mrs. Livingstone, "we, too, had the haughtiness of wealth and rank. Suffering also did in us its sharp work. The Judge accepted office, to place himself as a man of practical labor in sympathy with his countrymen, and this is the reason of his vast influence. And with the same views we have educated our children. Nor have we found it in any degree necessary to sacrifice the refinement proper to our position. Indeed, this would have weakened our power for good. Our rule has been to accept the position in which we have been born, and from that make our usefulness flow out as its fountain."

"I see it all and see myself, oh, in how clear a

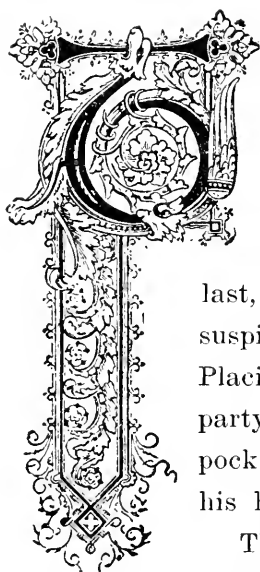


light!" exclaimed Mrs. Neville; "you have been not only my deliverers, but my teachers. I perceive that, by the style and manners suitable to my position, I must preserve the tie binding me to my own social class, and by kind deeds, from the sympathy of love, must distribute the beneficence of my wealth to those in another social class. Noble mission! For this I have been disciplined, and I am thankful for every trial which has prepared me for such a work!"

Forgetful of Judge Livingstone's injunction, the ladies prolonged their conversation during hours. The luncheon stood untasted, and, in despair, the Judge called Lucy, Edna and Frank, and sat down, with many a joke at the expense of the absent talkers. As the shadows of the evening began to gather, Mrs. Neville and Mrs. Livingstone arose from their seats. During that afternoon, their hearts were melted into each other, and they felt the glow of a pure and lasting friendship. When the sun was sinking into the sea and the witnessing stars began to look out from heaven, and the great waves were sending in the subdued music of their evening thunders, the ladies resumed their conversation on the piazza of the cottage, and English and American hearts became united in the same work to be carried on in monarchy and republic, showing that in all governments and in all circumstances, Love is the spring of our best deeds, and our purest happiness.

CHAPTER XVII.

FEAST IN A JAIL.



HE three confederates, as we have seen, having applied the torch to their DEPOT, fled down the stairs, lifted a cover from a concealed vault, and disappeared. Planning entered last, drawing back the iron lid, to prevent suspicion should the building be entered. Placing himself at the head of the party, he drew forth and lighted a pocket-lantern, and they proceeded under his leadership through the darkness.

They soon passed into a large city sewer, in which the odor was almost insufferable, and were compelled to bend low that they might avoid the top of the arch. Occasionally they had to crawl through the liquid filth, while the fierce noise of disturbed rats was not consoling or agreeable. Where the lantern did not shine too brightly through the deep midnight gloom, the fiery stare of little red eyes suggested that the place would be comfortable neither for sleeping nor dying.

Risk was wholly discouraged. He had to be kept between Planning and Slykes, who alternately led and

pushed him, and in some instances had to carry his heavy and helpless body. It was weary toil through the smells, the darkness, and the vile compounds. On and on and on they went, winding and twisting, now erect, now stooping, and now creeping, always in silence, broken only by their own footsteps and the rabid shrieks and struggles of their vermin companions.

Would it never end? Yes! there is a glimmer in the weary distance! Even Risk is encouraged. Is it the light of day? They approach the opening, and emerge, not into the beams of the moon and of the stars, but the glare of red flames still leaping to the clouds, illuminating the misty air, and sending wide around, in messages of fire, the news of the ruin of the INTER OCEANIC RAILWAY.

It was not an attractive spectacle presented by the conspirators. They were dripping with slum, foul with odors, and shivering with cold. In this pitiable condition, tormented, too, by fear, they found refuge in an empty freight-car, and stole a ride over a track along which they had rolled in the pride of princes of the land.

After a few miles, they secretly left their hiding place, and, spying a skiff, by another theft crossed the river, and made for the hills. A mountain cave afforded them brief refuge. But the telegraph had flashed their escape. The country was up. Officers were on their track. They were compelled to flee. Pursuing their way through the most remote and uninhabited districts, they reached Canada, and embarked

thence to London. Here they drew and divided one hundred thousand dollars of their money. Risk went to Constantinople, Planning to Melbourne, and Slykes to Hong Kong. The lightning followed them to Turkey, Australia and China. Frank Livingstone, guided by the Judge, was tireless. Secret detectives were dispatched, and in a few months the confederates were all arrested and lodged in the jail for trial.

Indictments were found for their numerous offences. The day came when they had to appear in court. Crowds assembled to see the fallen kings.

Frank Livingstone was there, like an avenging angel, and they knew that behind him was the legal wisdom of his father.

They plead not guilty, until confronted with the fatal letters taken from their own safe, and with the memoranda of Risk. Hopeless, they threw themselves on the *mercy* of the Court, and found it *Justice*.

All the world was against their villainies, and as they stood before the people they had plundered, the hate was intensified into exasperation which cried for vengeance.

Nothing protected them from violence but the power of the State. The Judge sentenced them to terms of imprisonment greatly exceeding the length of their lives, and gave them from the bench a scathing and memorable rebuke. They were led back to the jail amid the jeers of the mob and the execration of the country.

While Risk was overwhelmed, Planning and Slykes

remained bold and defiant. By means of a few gold pieces, they secured the room of state in the jail, and found spread for them a generous repast. The lights were brilliant, the fire blazed merrily, the wine sparkled, and the table stood loaded with a farewell feast. Sitting around, the jollity began. With a huge effort toward cheerfulness, and excited by the decanters, Planning said :

"Well, boys ; we had a jolly bonfire, a jolly run, a jolly ride, a jolly tour around the world after the latest fashion, a jolly trial, and now we are having a jolly adieu to our old life, and will have a jolly introduction to the penitentiary to-morrow. Here's health to striped jackets !"

"Coolie," cried Risk, in a tone of melancholy and despair, "stop this stuff, you know it's all a sham ! Our day is over, and we are doomed to prison. Ha !" he screamed, "I see two black faces in my cell. They'll follow me there !" and the wretch shivered in his fears.

"Lyman Risk !" said Slykes, with supreme contempt for this craven cowardice of his superior, "you disturb my gravity, as the locomotive said to the open draw it fell through. You sit there tremblin' like a shaky bridge under a freight train. Up old fellow ! The INTER OCEANIC is bust into bits finer than boiler scraps, but we ain't gone up yet ! We are on our mother earth and will yet be flying over her maternal bosom, like good babies, at the rate of a hundred mile an hour."

"What would you have better than this, Mr.

President?" asked Planning, draining his glass. "Eat, drink and be jolly! Do you want the best wines in America? Go to jail with money in your pocket! Do you crave the delicacies of the season? Go to jail, but don't forget your money! Would you be well served at table? Still the jail, and have your money ready for a tip! Would you flourish at the top of the pile in Young America? Get appointed Executor, or Bank President; rob widows and orphans; compromise, and pay them with regrets; avoid the luxury of suicide, and bring your money to jail! Or is this too slow for republican enterprise? Then trade in a hero's name, make a patriotic fervor; lie bonds and stocks into your vaults, hide your plunder, and then if you can resist the pleasure of blowing your brains out, come to jail for a better time and a bigger steal. If you'd have women crying over you, reporters writing about you, the country talking of you, commit a murder, set up a plea of insanity and get the privilege of going to jail; but be certain not to leave your money behind you!"

"True as St. Shammius preaching," said Slykes, with his Slyky grin. "Old Pills pays our bills and makes our little ills in jail, after all, not so bad as your smashed carcass in a lightnin' train. I tell you, this frolic is like a California palace-car with kitchen in one end and bar all the way through."

"Planning!" shrieked Risk, "you said murder! It's an infernal lie! I didn't strangle them. Don't say so again or I may hurt you."

"What's the matter?" inquired Planning, with amazement. "No English women here, Lyman, to scratch your face, tear your eyes out and make you sign checks and confessions with a pistol at your head."

"Nor two hags," said Slykes, with his leering laugh, "to face you at your wedding, and make music like the devil's steam whistle."

Risk arose in his fright. His eyes were like balls of blood glaring into space, and he moved his arms in frantic gesticulations, crying:

"It's a lie and I'll not stand it. I didn't do it. It was Lyman Risk's ghost, but not Lyman Risk. Find the ghost! Try the ghost! Hang the ghost, but let Lyman go free!"

After these wild words, he sat down, chattering and shivering like a frightened idiot. His friends were puzzled and astonished that the man who had been their leader in daring should be the first to sink under the mountain weight of their calamities. Still looking at him with his foxy, inquisitive eye, Slykes said:

"Why, Lyman, we'll begin to think you stopped with your own hand them female organ-pipes on the night of your musical marriage. No man before ever suspected that it was you took the wind out of the women's throttle-valves."

In his madness, Risk seized a decanter and threw it at Slykes, who, stooping, escaped the blow and the bottle was dashed to fragments against the wall of the jail.

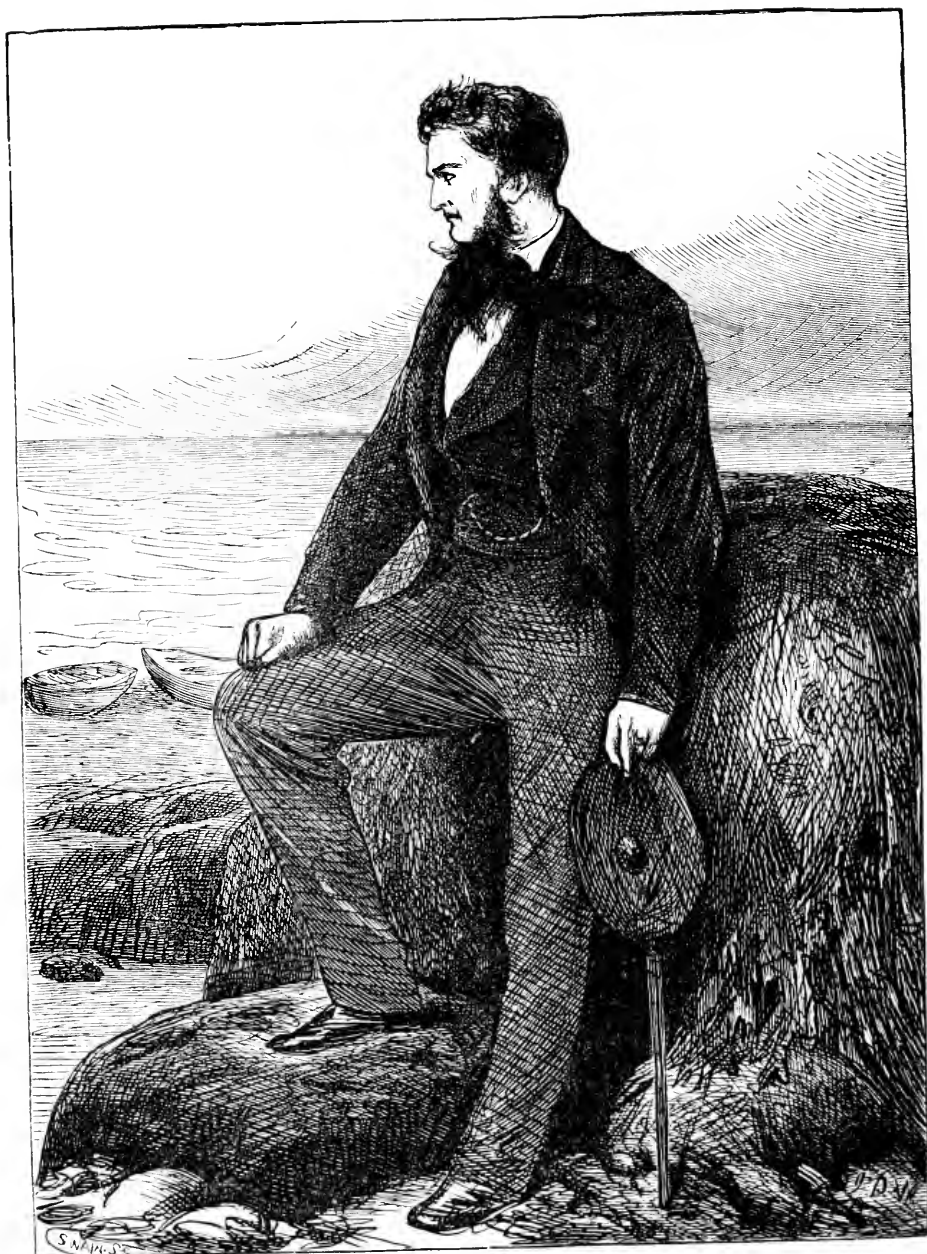
"You lie, Sam Slykes!" he yelled frantically. "Say that again and I'll murder you. No man saw me do it. You're trying to bring me to the gallows, and you'll hang there yourself for it."

The two men sought to quiet Risk. Clearly now they saw his coming insanity. Trouble and guilt were driving him mad. Yet neither they nor any other persons really suspected his crime. The revelation of *that* was reserved for the judgment. As he increased his potations his terror subsided, but wine could not dispel the deep gloom of his soul. He said, with a pitiable melancholy in his look and tone:

"Coolie and Sam, you are fools to make sport of our troubles. We have been arrested for conspiracy and arson, tried and convicted by a jury, and to-morrow we leave for life in a state prison, and yet you joke and laugh like stage drivers changing horses at an old-fashioned tavern. If Sol. Pilkilson gets his money from us in London you'll both be desperate as I am."

Slykes burst out with a shout of derisive triumph:

"Old Quack can't come it, Lyman! His pill boxes are too slow for our fast train. We'll snap our fingers, and dine and wine on his cash. We're like my old locomotive, 'Nancy.' She ran off a bridge and threw train into a gully. Some smashed, some scalded, some bruised, some drowned, some groanin', some shriekin', some prayin', some cursin', and death about generally. Sam Slykes crept out of the wreck, climbed back on the track, and waved his red rag to



“With four hundred thousand to my credit in Europe, I don't fear any penitentiary
in America.” Page 269.

stop another train, and was soon rushin' on jollier than ever, to make up for lost time. And INTER OCEANIC in some way will come out of this crash, from jail and penitentiary, and be the fastest and richest corporation in Young America."

"All right, Sam," replied Planning, as his brain began to burn and whirl. "All right; don't lose heart, Lyman, over breaking stone and walking lock-step in a stripe jacket; it won't last long. Money failed with juries, witnesses and judges, but has not lost power over guards and wardens. Money is a golden key which has unlocked many an American prison. Money is a golden ladder up which has climbed from disgrace many a dishonored corporation. Money opens golden paradises for rich bankrupts until they can repair their broken fortunes. With four hundred thousand to our credit in Europe, I don't fear any penitentiary in America."

"I can't take that view of the question," said Risk, sadly. "All looks to me hopeless and terrible. Your efforts at fun only add to our misery and despair. The past is fire, and the present and the future flame; red and mocking flame."

"Nonsense, Lyman," urged Slykes; "drown your troubles in champagne; pure stuff, and nothing else; cork popped out with a jolly noise. How the bubbles come creepin' up to the rim in this lamp light! Them sparkles look like the mountain dew when the train's flashin' past, and the sun's just climbin' the mornin'. But they're better, old fellow. They've life in them,

hope in them, joy in them. They warm heart and brain, while mountain dew is only good for the eyes of picnic misses on an excursion train. Here's resurrection to the INTER OCEANIC!"

After they had drunk and Risk seemed revived, Planning said:

"I never thought Frank Livingstone had such pluck in him. How did he get that package? Without the letters we could not have been convicted. I always dreaded them like destiny. Young Livingstone threw the shell that exploded us to ruin. Curse him for it!" exclaimed Planning, gnashing his teeth and repeating the words with a frightful emphasis of hate, "curse him and all the brood to a thousand generations!"

Lyman Risk sat in suppressed and tormenting silence. Occasionally he appeared gazing into vacancy and then would compress his eyelids as if he did not wish to see.

After a brief quiet, Sam Slykes burst out:

"Frank Livingstone flung the shell, but the Judge put in the powder and laid the train. The old man in his study threw the INTER OCEANIC off the track, and kindled the fire that burned it up."

"Now," said Planning, "I have a proposition to make. The excitements of our trial are over and we have plenty of time to-night. Let us relate our adventures in foreign countries. A tour around the world is all the rage, and we have accommodated ourselves to the reigning fashion. Let us light fresh cigars,

take another drink, and then, Sam, do you begin with your veracious story."

The conspirators readily complied with the suggestion, and Slykes soon began:

"That mile of rats astonished me, a screechin' and a creepin' round my feet, with their eyes glarin' like young headlights; came out of sewer like a spattered locomotive; a tramp's ride in a freight car, and a scatter from our cave like wreckers from a train they've keeled over by a cross tie. After our meetin' in Canada and pleasure sail to London, Sam Slykes brought up in Hong Kong. Lived among the only celestials he'll ever know, and sported a pig-tail. Never had a better time. Like an excursion picnic every day. Worshipped Uncle Joss, burned papers to him, offered sweet cakes to the ghosts of my ancestors, fed with chop sticks, and played the dumb man that couldn't speak his vernacular. Wouldn't do. Uncle Sam's lightnin' was too smart for me; caught me by my pig-tail, shot me over the Pacific ocean, landed me in California, and hurried me to this flourishing Metropolis, to drink champagne in jail. But I'll soon raise the stars and stripes over the INTER OCEANIC, and we'll be flyin' over the world with the best of them yet."

"And I," cried Planning, with a gleaming eye and a clear, piercing tone, "will tell you what you never heard before. After our separation at the cave, I came out at the river, with the whole country, yelling like bloodhounds, at my heels. I made for a high

rock, climbed it, and stood on a jutting crag, from which I leaped a hundred feet sheer into the water. Striking the bottom, I sprang back to the surface, swam and reached the opposite shore, pushing on until I joined you in Canada. After leaving London, I took steamer for Melbourne, and played the Englishman, and hid in a gold mine. It wouldn't answer. One evening, after a hard day's work, amid the infernal chill and gloom in the lamp-light from my cap, as I emerged in my soiled suit, I was arrested, taken to the Australian capital, ironed in the hold of a vessel, and brought to this jolly feast, where J. Coolie Planning swears he'll persevere until he is crowned Railway King of America. Curses on his takers, and deliverance when our time comes!"

"Do you think, Coolie, we'll ever get out," asked Sam, despondingly. "Slim chance in my opinion. Whistle to keep courage up, but it's all gammon. But hope or no hope, Sam Slykes will stand by the throttle valve, while there's a stick in his tender, a coal in his furnace, a pound of steam in his boiler, a screw in his engine, or a rail on his track. When he leaves it, you'll find some collidin' train has flung his handsome body from the cow-catcher higher toward heaven than his soul will ever be."

"That's spirit, Sam," roared Planning, grasping Slykes' hand, and, under the power of wine and brandy, nearly shaking his sharp fingers off. "I like your pluck, and I'll fight, if I'm to live chained in a cell and to be swung out of life on a gallows rope."

"True grit, Coolie," said Slykes, in turn wildly and violently shaking the hand of Planning. "Your words ring sharp as a sound car wheel under a steel hammer."

"Now, Lyman," resumed Planning, "let us have your story, last and best, to crown our feast. Imagine yourself, after a full glass, on your old coach-box, whip and rein in hand, stage full, passengers jolly, horses fed, rubbed and champing for a start, road smooth, birds singing, and all nature laughing and saying, 'Go it, boys!' Better, after all, those slow days than our fast times. If the stage-horse was a snail beside the steam-horse, he made fewer smash-ups, and was a good deal honester animal. Lyman Risk was happier on his coach-box than on the throne of the INTER OCEANIC."

"Don't talk of it, Coolie!" cried Risk, in an agony. "You're driving me crazy. The thought of my happy old stage, Amelia, kills me. And them horses, them free, jolly, honest horses. The memory of it burns me like fire. Then those girls loved me and I ruined them. It's too much. The English woman brought more trouble, and I went down, down, down, to this jail. In Constantinople I dyed this white head black, and my beard, too. I put on a turban and a Turk's dress, and went to the mosque to say my prayers and ask Heaven to forgive me. I tell you, it wouldn't do. The two women stood over me, and my prayers couldn't get above them. They shut me out of heaven into flames, flames, flames! This room is fire! Put it

out! I'm fire myself. I say, put it out! Fire, fire, fire! Stamp it out, Sam! Water, water! Throw it on, Coolie! Quick, quick! Fire, fire, fire!"



CHAPTER XVIII.

LOVE ON THE MOONLIT SEA.



SUMMER moon, red, large, and round was sailing up out of the sea, like a spirit of the light, and flinging its silver over the waves. The evening star beamed, bright in the heavens, and all the glittering host sparkled in the blue of the sky and of the ocean, while between the brilliant concaves glided a sail, and in the stern of a white, graceful boat could be seen a man and woman in low, earnest conversation. The waves broke in music at the bow of the slight craft, while behind it was a trail of splendors blazing into gold.

Frank Livingstone and Lucy Neville are the persons we have noticed, and were taking an evening sail. The lights of Newport could be seen glancing in the distance. Indeed, the keen gaze could detect the misty outlines of the shores in the brightening moonlight. The low thunder of a steamer's wheels boomed across the waves, her sails were dimly visible, and her green and red lights, moving rapidly, gave interest and animation to the scene.

"I am considered a practical fellow, Lucy," said Frank Livingstone. "A lawyer by profession and preference, seeing constantly human nature in its worst aspects, and yet I believe that there is nothing so true as the true love of true hearts. Nor is this with me either fancy or sentiment. I believe it on the facts."

"Well, Frank," replied the beautiful girl, smiling in the moonlight, "I am not disposed to doubt your proposition. Before this particular tribunal you will not have to establish it by any labored argument. I have seen the proof of it all my life in my own father and mother, and my woman's instincts tell me that it is so."

"But," continued Frank, "it must be love founded on mutual sympathies. It implies subtle and mysterious affinities beyond the power of words. Where these exist, the tie between hearts is immortal. And yet there is so much sham in the married state, so many separations and divorces, so much misery, so many bleeding hearts and dishonored lives, that our theory is rudely shaken. I do not wonder that cynics snarl and satirists ridicule, and that the world pronounces marriage founded on affection, a myth, and what you and I believe, romantic and sentimental stuff."

"This is true," said Lucy; "but I find my answer at home. Oh, could you have seen the devotion of papa at Delhi, his anxiety, his courage, his tenderness to mamma, his delicacy and generosity during years, and her return in confidence and admiration,

I had almost said adoration, you could no more doubt the power of love than the power of mind or the power of muscle. I have seen it from my infancy, brightening their lives, and know as well that its light shone over our home as I know that yon moon is illuminating these waves."

As she spoke, she pointed upward to the luminary flinging glory over the sea.

"Yes," answered Frank, "I have had similar proof in my own home. Affection gives it a charm nothing else can bestow. I could as easily believe those stars will drop this instant, to be extinguished in the waves, as that love could fade out of the hearts of my father and my mother. I am not insensible to gifts of birth, wealth and culture, but, above all, I hold the union of true hearts to be the only foundation for a household. This is the ordination of Heaven, and lies deep in the nature of man."

"Dear Frank," she replied, looking sweetly into his face, and speaking in a low, tender tone, "I believe we have found this secret of life. Until we have been tested, it is not becoming to boast, yet I think our marriage will bring enduring happiness. You have won me, Frank and you deserve me, and I will be glad ever to testify my grateful love, and prove in our hard and cold age that the bloom of the affections is as real as that of the flowers, yet not fragile, nor perishing, but eternal."

"Lucy, may I tell you a secret you have not known?" inquired Frank, laughing. "I fear my

devotion was not any particular benevolence, or rather it was the most intense form of selfishness. Once on the *Britannia* I caught your eye looking into mine. It was a casual glance. But it shot a fire through me, that has burned ever since, and I, the cynical young bachelor, went over the world chasing you, as wildly as any old mediæval knight errant ever rode and fought in behalf of the lady of his heart and vow. Now the thing is out. There was no benevolence in it, and no mystery whatever. I was simply a fellow in love. Lucy Neville on my shield was the inspiration of this generous and chivalrous hero. But don't tell your mother, or mine, or the world at large, or my exploits will lose half their glory with the British nation." Frank laughed until the boat shook, while the sounds of his merriment rang out far over the waters.

"You compliment me, indeed," cried Lucy, "at the expense of me and yourself, but I am not willing to believe that your actions did not spring from the sympathies of a kind heart. Your persistence was most wonderful. Oh, without you, where, where, should we have been! I tremble to think of the chasm down which we were sinking. It was frightful. The very memory of it overcomes me, and you, you Frank, were our deliverer."

Tears trembled on the eyelids of the girl, her bosom heaved, and she leaned her head on the breast of her lover.

"You must not forget, Lucy," said Frank, looking

down on her with a manly tenderness, "that without my father, my efforts would have been unavailing. Until I called him to my aid, I went blundering on sadly. He untwisted the tangled skein of your lives. His keen sagacity was wonderful. I often marvelled that a shrewd old Judge of sixty, beyond dreams and fancies, should have been so engaged in what seemed a romantic and hopeless chase."

"Yes," cried Lucy, with increased emotion, "it is amazing! Heaven inspired and guided you. Oh, how terrible the coil wound around us! What helpless strangers we were! How strong and merciless our enemies! Think of two frail women in the power of such dreadful men! Never can we repay the debt we owe you and your noble father and mother."

Lucy was again entirely overpowered. Never did the cold moon sparkle on purer tears, or the bright stars gaze down on a more grateful heart. The very waves seemed to dance and gleam and gurgle with an answering sympathy of joy. "Now, said the lovely girl, as her face brightened through her tears, "I have a secret to tell you. Are you prepared for it? It is not less strange and impressive than any of the most marvelous events of this most marvelous year of our family histories."

"You excite my curiosity, Lucy," cried Frank, eagerly; "tell it to me at once!"

"Just before Grandpa Arlington's death," she resumed, with deep and pathetic solemnity in her voice and manner, "he was aroused from the stupor in

which he had been for months. All his strength seemed suddenly restored. His voice became clear and powerful. Having called mamma to his side he spoke to her words that were full of the glory of Heaven which indeed was shining around his face and head. He then requested me to come to him, and his dying command was. "Lucy, trust your SAVIOUR and marry your deliverer." She could speak no more, but fell back into Frank's arms. Long she lay there sobbing and looking through her tears at the celestial lights beaming so serenely above her. Frank could not interrupt the silence. At last he said, in a whispered tone :

"This is not the least remarkable part of the strange history of our mingled lives, and seems to put the eternal seal of Heaven on our marriage."

He embraced her, and their hearts were forever one.

"I have something more of importance to communicate, Lucy," Frank began again. "I have been passing through a great struggle, about which I have thought it best not to speak to you, or any other person. Nor has the storm passed away. I cannot yet see a ray through the cloud."

"What has disturbed you, Frank? However great the tempest within, you seem all sunshine."

"Lucy, I have been trying to give up the old flag."

"And has Young America succeeded? But why make the attempt?"

"You, Lucy, are the cause of my troubles."

"I, Frank, I!" she exclaimed. "What connection can an English girl like myself have with your American flag? Am I a star or a stripe, in your eye? But tell me your difficulties."

"Knowing, Lucy, that I could not ask you to leave England, I have been trying to shift my allegiance from the flag of my country to the banner of St. George."

"Oh, I see it all," cried Lucy. "A descendant of old General Livingstone, who fought the British through the revolution, can't be drawn over to England by the attractions of any British magnet. Well, then, Frank, I'll settle the question. The magnet will come to America. I have been before you, and thought out the whole subject. Frank, you are my country, my title, my estate, my banner, my everything."

"Thank Heaven!" he exclaimed, embracing her; "but it seems impossible."

"It's true, Frank," she cried. "I am yours wholly and forever. Your home is my home, and your life is my life."

Just then was heard a louder roar of wheels, and the noble steamer was seen to be approaching. Splendidly she rushed through the waters in the moonlight. She appeared glowing and palpitating with life. Out from her mast the stars and the stripes gallantly floated. Frank Livingstone stood upright and pointed to the flag of his country.

"Lucy," he said, "I fought under that banner during four years of civil war. I have seen it flying

amid the smoke of battle. Torn with bullets and wet with blood, I have seen it go down in defeat. Again I have seen it float in triumph amid the shouts of our exulting army. I have seen it wound around my comrades and buried with the heroes in their graves. Flung out over the captured capital of the Confederacy, I have seen it blazing in the glory of its triumph, the emblem of a free, happy and united people. Oh, thank Heaven, with you I can now live under it, die under it, and be buried under it—an American citizen."

Frank Livingstone sat down, exhausted by his strong feeling and passionate words. The noise of the steamer grew fainter, and the flag could be seen dimly in the gathering haze of the sea, as he turned his boat to the shore, gliding onward in a profound stillness only broken by the plashings of the waves.

He was about to realize his dream, and to contribute to the eternal union of the North and the South under the banner which he loved.

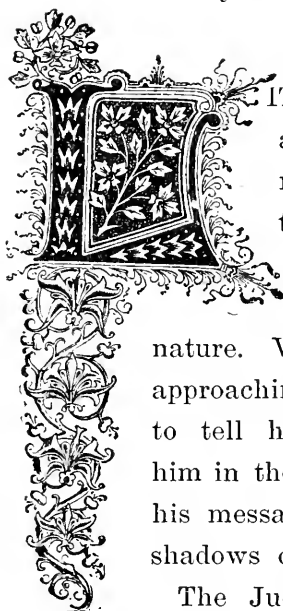




"A letter, beautifully written, signed '*Victoria*.'"
Page 288.

CHAPTER XIX.

QUEEN VICTORIA'S LETTER.



LITTLE Midge was standing beneath a great tree, and looking at the moon shining and shimmering through the leaves. His artistic eye perceived the beauty of a spectacle scarcely surpassed in nature. When Frank's footsteps were heard approaching, the boy stepped out before him to tell him that his father wished to see him in the cottage library. Having delivered his message, Midge glided away among the shadows of the elms.

The Judge's sea-side study was a cozy place. Everything was diminutive in scale, but full of grace, beauty and comfort. When Frank entered, the venerable man laid down his book, removed his glasses, and began :

"My son, I have some matters of importance to communicate. And first, I have received a telegram from old Pilkilson, informing me that he has secured the London money, and taken their last possible hope from those INTER OCEANIC knaves. Now, we will

leave them forever, and pass to the society of decent people."

"Permit me, first," answered Frank, "to express my joy that our work has thus been crowned and consummated. I am glad there is no prospect in life for the scoundrels but a penitentiary cell."

"I have received gratifying news also from England," said the Judge, abruptly. "News strange as anything in this year's eventful history."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Frank, with a start of surprise. "May I inquire from whom?"

"From the Queen," replied the Judge, with a look of keen satisfaction.

"The Queen!" said Frank, in astonishment. "What can the Majesty of Britain and Empress of India have to say to us plain republicans? There seems no end to surprises."

The Judge arose, went to a desk, opened a drawer, and took from it a letter, beautifully written, signed "VICTORIA," and emblazoned in gold with a crown, supported by two unicorns rampant.

Her Majesty recited the way in which Judge Livingstone and his son had rescued the daughter and granddaughter of the Earl of Arlington, a British Peer of high birth and great esteem, and then expressed the royal admiration and gratitude for conduct so noble and disinterested.

"This is truly most marvelous, most unexpected, and most gratifying," cried Frank, overwhelmed with astonishment and delight. "In my wildest dreams I

never conceived that such a compliment could be paid to our family."

"I confess," said the Judge, "I feel pleased. This letter will draw more closely together England and the United States. It has even a national significance, and yet," he continued, with an equivocal smile, "I do not see that it relieves you. Difficulties surround you from which there seems no escape."

"To what do you refer?" answered Frank, blushing.

"When a man's heart runs away with his head, he is always in trouble. I fear, my son, that is your unfortunate case."

"My heart, sir, has won Lucy Neville, and that, I'm sure, my head could never have done. Such a prize proves the heart better than the head."

"Yes," answered the Judge. "But it is your very success makes the trouble. You can neither follow your prize to England, nor keep it in America."

"This time you are mistaken, father. Lucy has settled the question and decided to live in this country."

"Surely, Frank," said the Judge, excitedly, "you have not asked such a sacrifice? After what you have done for her, the request would have been a cruel and ungenerous compulsion. Your heart has betrayed you after all."

"You should know me too well, sir, to suppose that I would have placed Lucy, even by a hint, in such a position. Her choice is voluntary. She prefers America. With all her noble blood and aristocratic connections she admires our republican manhood. She

is fascinated, too, with the scenery of the country. In truth, she is a natural democrat, and takes to us as a lark to the morning air."

"Ah! I perceive," said the Judge, "this young Arlington is, after all, a *woman*. She looks at our country through her lover, and at her lover through her heart. You, Frank, have given color to our landscapes and polish to our manners. I only hope that her decision will not prove the caprice of a love-sick maiden."

"I will trust my whole life to it as the choice of a wise and true woman. We have just learned that the Arlington title perishes in Lord Clare, and part of the estate will be lost to Mrs. Neville. But she will inherit the castle, the London house, and about thirty thousand pounds a year. We are to be married in the little church near Arlington Castle, and after a voyage round the world in the late Earl's steam-yacht, we are to settle in my own native city. You must acknowledge in my case the heart has managed affairs rather successfully. But perhaps you would have been better pleased if I could have secured the title also."

"Not at all, Frank! I do not aspire to have you Earl of Arlington. I have something better for you in our own country. I am about to give you some advice that will startle you."

"I feel, father, that I deeply need your counsel, and more especially as I have finally decided to abandon the Law, and in the field of politics devote myself to the service of my country."

"She needs you, my son. You have vast wealth and now your training in the study and practice of the Law will enable you to accomplish much for our Republic. On this very point I wish to advise you."

"And on this very point," interposed Frank, "I most need your advice."

"Never presume on your birth and wealth to patronize the people. Meet every citizen on the basis of an equal political manhood. Let whatever deference is paid you be the spontaneous tribute to your merit. In no other way can you secure true esteem and confidence. Some of our rich upstarts grasp a poor man's hand as a condescension, and hold office as if they were doing a favor to the country. To succeed politically you must forget rank and riches, and stand on your manhood. From the ways of nobles and monarchs we were separated by the revolution."

"I shall not forget the lesson," said Frank. "It is better to be a MAN than a Livingstone. I will try to make the thought mold my character and guide me in my conduct."

"It will be your business, Frank, not to follow, but to fight these apes of English aristocracy. Counterfeit coin is always avoided by honest men. Take the peacock plumes from our American Jackdaws! How many of these vulgar plunderers imitate the style of lords! Indeed, many kings cannot boast greater luxury and splendor. Modern monarchs would lose their thrones if they perpetrated half the iniquities of our Republican despots. Fight them till you die.

Tumble their crowns into the ditch. If I talk longer I will turn socialist and advocate the commune. I sometimes think that every man possessing more than a fixed sum should be forced to give the whole income of the excess to the support of schools and colleges. Certainly, to relieve the poor, we who are rich should bear greater burdens of taxation. Yet I am afraid to advocate such measures in these days of dynamite. As the people outnumber kings and monopolists they will suffer most from these indiscriminate explosions. Besides, assassinations never helped liberty. Still I would like to clip the wings of rich rascals in some undiscovered way that would stop their flight, and make their stripped feathers useful."

"Father," cried Frank, "your heat astonishes me. You quite bewilder me. What do I hear? You, a Livingstone, a descendant of Federalists, a traditional conservative, avowing principles so radical and almost revolutionary! Why do you not withdraw from your party, and in your solitary integrity bear witness against the times."

"Never, Frank, never!" said the Judge, evidently wincing. "Like a young racer, your impetus carries you beyond the goal. You must not place too much stress on what I utter, from the ardor of the moment, to my own son, and in the privacy of my study."

"Well, soberly, would you advise me to work for my country independently of party entanglements?"

"By no means, my son! No man in our republic can be isolated. Separated from party, his influence

is lost. In every great issue, you must stand by your party, otherwise you will be as solitary as our obelisk, and as powerless. Only through men can you reach men. You cannot move the world from a wilderness. I never knew a man leave his party on the ground of superlative virtue who did not become a cynical Pharisee, declaiming against errors he had made himself helpless to correct. The loftier your position, the wider your influence."

"But suppose there are party measures I cannot approve? Shall I yield to the whip? Shall I be lashed into a vote for evil men and evil ends, or shall I withdraw, be execrated, and lose my influence? This is the dilemma I foresee."

"I confess, my son, a difficulty here. Great tact is needed to follow my rule. Each case will furnish its own clew to your course. But I shall advise you, except under extraordinary circumstances, never to sever your party ties. A reformer may easily become an errant Quixote, and spend his life in fighting wind-mills."

"Thank you again; father, thank you for your wise counsel. Strong in great principles, I can yield in particular measures. The tree sturdiest in root and trunk may have the most pliant branches."

"And Frank, with all the monstrous villainies of politicians and monopolists, have faith in the people. Their instincts guide our nation right. Surely they are as much to be trusted as kings! The Georges, the Charles', the James', the Henries of England were

net lights in our world. Usually, the French monarchs were no better. Spain, Italy, Austria!—their kings were neither saints nor heroes. From Julius and Augustus, the Cæsars had a rapid descent to the Neroes, the Caligulas and the Domitians. Nor do the sculptures of Egypt and Assyria improve our opinions of Oriental potentates. TRUST THE PEOPLE! Whatever our delinquencies, our constitution is founded on eternal right, and theoretically our government is the best possible. We are the outcome of the wisdom of the world.”

“Father, after our battles with corruption, I am glad to hear these inspiring words. I do not want my soul’s eye blinded by the mists of our political marshes. He who walks amid filth is in danger of soil. Much with rascals, a man doubts himself. This conversation has purified me. I am like a traveler bespattered on his journey, who has bathed in a mountain stream, and who breathes an Alpine air, and I must try to keep my flesh and my garments pure.”

“Another word, my son! Do not let go the anchor of your faith in Christianity. An old lawyer is not likely to be deceived. After an examination of the modern objections of science and criticism, I am firmer than ever on the Eternal Rock. The Bible is the only foundation for a man or for a government. It will yet fill the world with light, love and peace.”

Overcome with emotion, Frank Livingstone knelt before his father. The old man placed his hands on his son’s head, and gave him his blessing.

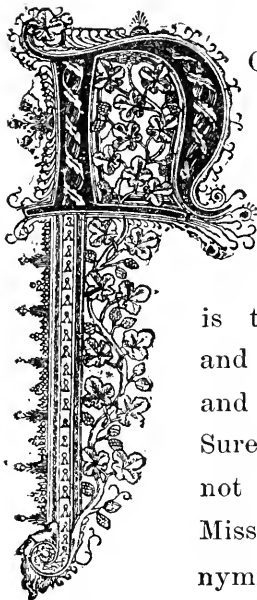
The effects of that hour were never lost. They perpetuated themselves in the character and career of young Livingstone, and through him elevated his country and spread out over the world.

The center of the circle of human influence is a point—its circumference an eternity.



CHAPTER XX.

FRANK AND LUCY AT ARLINGTON CASTLE.



NOT long after the events we have narrated, a happy party is on the steamer Republic, in the New York harbor. Judge and Mrs. Livingstone are there; Mrs. Neville and Lucy are there; Frank Livingstone is there; and who is that gentleman and lady standing at a little distance and admiring together a passing yacht? Surely we have seen her before! Is it not Miss Edna Livingstone? It *was* Miss Edna Livingstone. But her patronymic has been lost to her forever. She is now the joyous bride of Mr. Henry Roosevelt, Frank's former law partner, and his successor in business.

And who is that splendid little fellow gazing across the blue waters of the Hudson and glancing his great, black, kindling eyes over the beautiful proportions of the graceful ship? It is our Midge, bound for Rome, to be educated for an artist, and happy in the prospect of his ample fortune.

The morning is brilliant. Not a cloud flings down its shadow over the bay. At the mast-head, in friendly

folds, fly the English and American flags, together streaming in the breeze. See, the vessel is drawing out from the dock! The panting tug takes her into the midst of the broad bay. Handkerchiefs wave on ship and shore. Soon the Republic is through the narrows, out on the wide ocean, and in a few uneventful days lies anchored in the Mersey.

Not long after, the Church of St. Mary's, near Arlington Castle, witnesses a gay scene. The cross is gleaming in the morning sun. Floods of joyous brilliance pour through the stained windows, and color arch, and altar and pillar, mingling their hues with the bloom of fragrant flowers. Such a gay and distinguished assemblage has seldom met in the quiet, little church.

Frank Livingstone and Lucy Neville stand before the chancel, which is wreathed in roses, while the organ peals forth its exulting notes.

Hark! the clergyman is heard, and the stillness becomes intense and universal. The solemn service proceeds. A venerable relative gives away the bride. Frank and Lucy are pronounced man and wife, and then succeed the congratulations of relatives and friends.

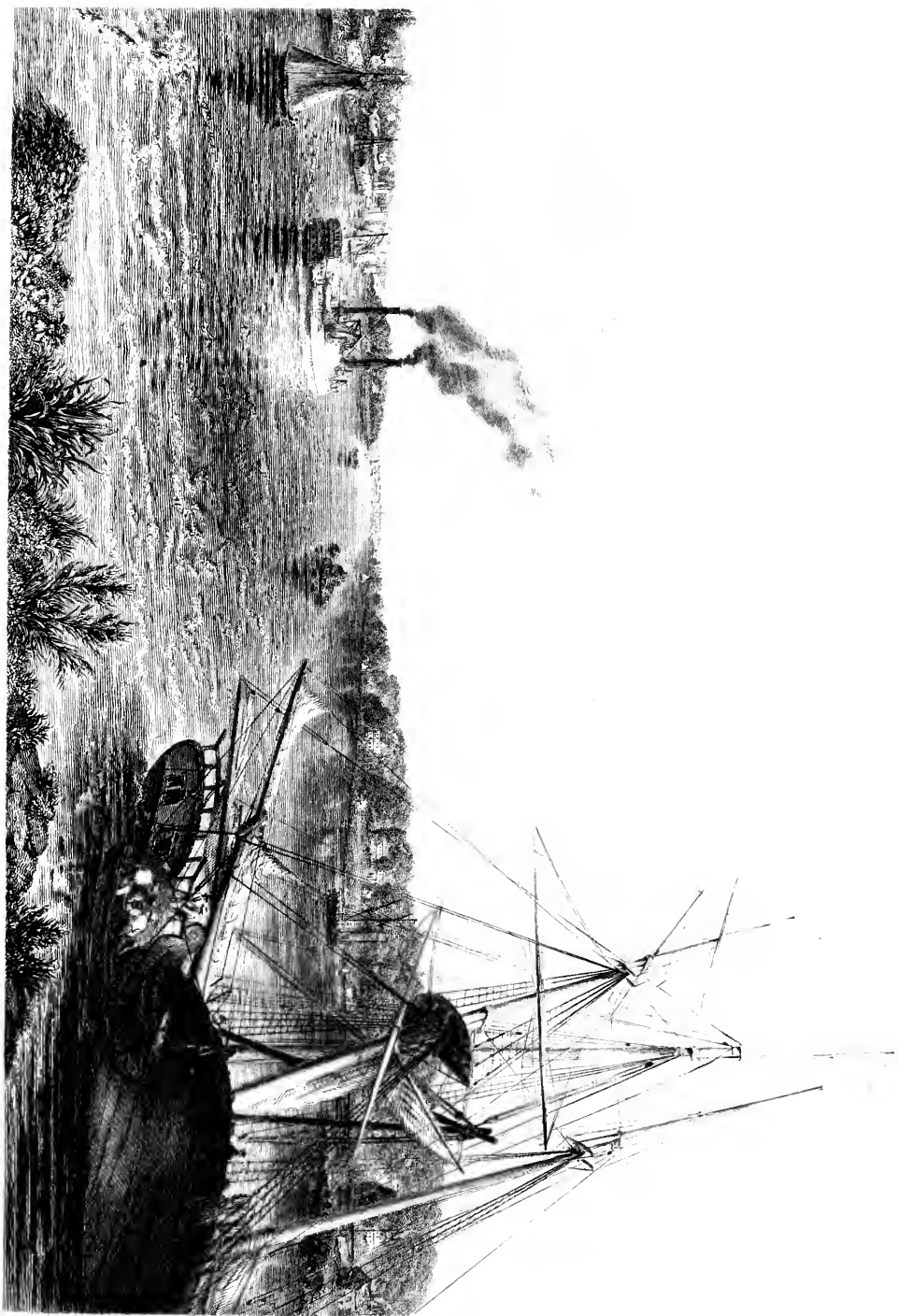
At night, Arlington Castle is brilliantly illuminated. Buildings and trees are in a blaze, casting their light around over the land and out over the sea. Nobles in the house and people on the lawn are feasting and dancing in celebration of the glad occasion, which is uniting two great nations by another bond.

Mrs. Neville was true to her discipline and her

vocation. Her princely benefactions in London were wisely directed by herself, and fruitful in immense good to the bodies and souls of the ignorant and suffering poor. The Arlington pride had been effectually subdued, and she moved among the lowly with the hand and smile of a sympathizing, Christian love. Nor were her charities confined to the British metropolis. They flowed out in streams of wise beneficence over the earth.

After a voyage round the world, Frank and Lucy lived in America. They, too, had learned in suffering the lessons of humility and sympathy, and had, also, before them the noble examples of Judge and Mrs. Livingstone. In all their relations they were happy. The people saw and recognized their merit. Despite their aristocratic blood, they became most admired proofs of the elevating and ennobling effects of our republican institutions.

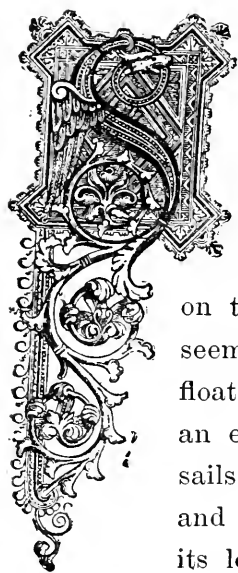






CHAPTER I.

THE BATTERY.



SPRING, at the opening of our sequel, was just giving its last tint of green to the grounds about the Battery and developing the leaves into their Summer luxuriance. A soft haze lay on the Orange Mountains. Staten Island seemed retiring into the distance, and floating in a golden glory shed down from an evening cloud. On the Bay, the lazy sails were gleaming in the setting sun, and a huge steamer, as if panting with its load, drew its dark length through the blazing waters. Even the sharp sounds of the cars above and stages below appeared to sink away in the murmurs of the tranquil air. Over all, bathed in the light, rose the spire of old Trinity. In the stillness could be heard low bursts of occasional applause escaping from an eager crowd, who watched the form of a girl, balanced on a rope, stretched from the street to the roof of one of those red houses, near Broadway, now occupied by offices of the great steamship companies, but which, in the days of Washington, were tenanted by the federalistic aristocracy of New York.

Nothing could exceed the grace of the young performer, as she stood on the point of her toe, grasping her pole in both her hands, and then running to the eave of the building and returning toward the ground with an agility which might belong to an inhabitant of a celestial sphere. Her exquisite limbs, her light, flowing hair, her blue eye, her perfect features, touched with a most pensive expression, her shape shown to the greatest advantage in her bright oriental costume as she moved aloft like a creature of the air, altogether awakened, even in the rudest spectator, an inexpressible interest and curiosity.

Beneath the girl, and gazing at her with a dark glittering eye, was a lad whose cheek showed the brown of an Indian sun, and who had just concluded some of those marvelous, almost magical tricks, which reach their perfection only in the islands of Japan and along the shore of the Ganges. He was now eliciting from a species of oriental guitar some sad and sweet notes harmonizing with the perilous occasion, and which, unconsciously to his audience, breathed over them a mysterious influence. The whole scene was surrounded by a subdued, undefinable charm, and the actors were evidently beings of another blood and another clime.

Apart from the crowd, and looking with intense interest, were two men, both, also, foreigners. One, a Chinaman, with all the marked features of his nation, and gigantic in his stature, was in the dress of an American workman. The other, a gentleman,

tall, stately, noble in face and refined in expression, with an aspect singularly benevolent, was attired in the style of our country, yet with a view to his disguise. His English was so nearly perfect that it would be impossible to express on paper the slight peculiarities of his tones and accents.

"A vision of beauty!" he exclaimed, with a most agitating emotion. "I have traveled over the world, and never have seen a more exquisite grace. What say you, Ling?"

Employing the address he had been instructed to use, he replied in a strange mingling of Chinese mispronunciation and American slang:

"Siree, no Melliken girlee like that lookee. She from land of flowers, or from moon down brightee. Me tinkee her hair and her eyes from your own countree, suree, certinee."

"From my country, Ling, did you say?" exclaimed the gentleman, with visibly increased agitation. "Who knows? Can this, indeed, be she whom I seek—in such a vocation, in this strange city, far from her princely home? Oh, Heaven, can it be she? Nay! it is but a dream. Impossible! Yet I feel in my heart a strange warmth and trembling."

"May Ling ask how oldee she when she leftee you? This she be boutee twelvee years."

"Just her age after whom I have traversed all lands during so many weary, disappointing years of exile. And her eyes were blue, and her hair flaxen. Surely, those features might belong even to an empress.

All things answer to my recollections. And who can be that dark youth, her companion, with those black, wonderful eyes! He is about thirteen, and has, in his face and form, a surpassing beauty and refinement. In neither of them appears the degradation of their calling."

"Better we waitee," interposed Ling, "and see wheree they hencee go. Me you folloree when you sayee."

"I will walk after them," said the gentleman, "and do you keep a short distance behind. Possibly, there will be peril in our way, and you will be needed. On no account lose sight of me."

The giant smiled out of his small eyes, and a ripple of light seemed to pass over his yellow skin, as he answered:

"Life of me from de sea you savee and loseee nealee your own—true me to you as to de ghostee of him who lifee me gavee—true all de timee 'til in de gravee me go too."

While they spoke, two policeman appeared and produced a visible alarm in the girl and in the lad. The latter, with quick skill, by a dexterous jerk, detached the rope from its lofty fastening, formed it into a coil, grasped it in his right hand, and his guitar in his left, and the two together passed through the opening and admiring crowd. They walked a few steps along Broadway, turned suddenly down a narrow street, wound their way through the most obscure places, until they at last entered a tall shabby brick house above Fulton Market and fronting Water Street.

The gentleman followed unobserved, and Ling further behind. Now the former stood in a small alley, hidden by the gathering shadows of the evening, and so situated that he could see and hear what transpired through the open door opposite.

On a low platform, beneath a raised window, sat a large man in his shirt sleeves fanning himself, but reeking with perspiration. He had a princely nose and forehead, and in all his features, and in his portly form, were the faded traces of a superb manly beauty, except that in his restless eye and his equivocal mouth and chin were sure indications that a weak conscience and debasing appetites had obtained the dominion of his better nature. His hard, cold, terrible expression chilled and alarmed the beholder. The youthful pair walked toward him with trembling fear, and stood like culprits in his presence.

"Ha! Tippoo! Lillie! come at last! But you are late, what has kept you?" he burst forth in a loud, harsh voice, distinctly heard by the listener.

"We were near the Battery, the crowd was big, and we kept on longer than we thought," faltered the lad, in tones just faintly intelligible.

"A long stay makes more pay," he answered with a low, savage laugh.

"No!" said Tippoo, frightened and embarrassed, "Diable, we have only brought you a dollar this evening."

As the boy spoke he counted over the money in small change, and gave it to his master.

"You rascal," cried the man in fierce anger, "this all? I have taught you to call me Diable and Diable I will be. You are a pair of thieves. You have been loitering and lounging. You have spent my money at the candy-stands and pie-shops. I will have it out of your flesh, you drones! Off with your shirt, Tippoo!"

Saying this, he seized a small whip with a sharp lash and was about to inflict a stinging blow, when the boy, uttering a cry of fear and agony, said:

"No, Diable, we have not eaten one thing since we left you this morning. Here is all, every cent. The police came at our last performance, and we had to leave before we could pass my cap. Is not this so, Lillie?"

The girl lifted toward him her blue eyes and beautiful face, down which was rolling a tear, and said, in a plaintive, beseeching, tone, "Yes, Diable, Tippoo says true. That is all we have taken. We were hungry, but we never spent one cent. We have not deceived you to-day, and we never have deceived you but twice, when we were so faint and tired we were nearly dead for food, and a little pie did so tempt us."

Her appeal, so touching and truthful, might have softened a soul of stone. It seemed rather to exasperate Diable. He appeared almost to foam and flash with rage, as he said, in a suppressed, inhuman growl, such as a ghoul might have uttered:

"You lie! You both lie! You agree together to





cheat me. You are drones and thieves, and you force me to the lash. If I don't have money, I will have blood. I have kept you and trained you for years, and now is the time when I must get back what I spent, with interest. You must bring home every night twice as much as this. Do you hear? twice as much, or make up the difference by your flesh."

Saying this, he struck Tippoo several blows which made him writhe with pain, and was just beginning to inflict barbarous treatment on the more tender form of his young companion, when there was an interruption in a way I will now proceed to relate.

The gentleman had called Ling to his side, and both were observing what we have narrated. In half soliloquy, the former said, as he gazed :

"Surely I have seen that brute's face. Ha! it seems to float back from the dim and far past. But it is impossible! A Prince of the House of Ruric could never be so degraded. It is a fancy, silly and impossible. This cannot be the man I have seen in his ancestral halls, and among the proudest in the palace of the Emperor. Yet I cannot be mistaken! Degraded as this savage is, his features I can still recognize. It is he—it is certainly he—and the girl! I tremble to think she may be the object of my search, now sunk into such an abyss of horror and debasement."

While these words were escaping almost unconsciously from the lips of the speaker, the gathering rage of Diable had begun to expend itself on his victims, and

the flesh of the girl was quivering under his first blow as she writhed in a pain, the more touching, because dumb and suppressed.

“By Heavens, Ling,” resumed the gentleman, “I can stand this no longer. I will go to the rescue, and save that fair young creature from the villain’s lash. We will come, I foresee, to bitter blows, but under no circumstances leave your watch in this place, even if I am in danger of my life, until you hear my old signal, the whistle.”

Having finished these words, he crossed the street, entered the door, and passed down the low, long, dark room, to the spot where the children stood before their tormentor. Seeing a stranger approach, Diable looked up with amazement. Such an intrusion on his domain he deemed an impossible hazard and effrontery. He scowled on the daring invader with face and eye of vengeance. In his turn the stranger met the glance of the tyrant with an equal defiance. The two men stood thus in silence staring at each other. A hate of generations seemed blazing in their breasts and flashing from their eyes. Finally the stranger interrupted the silence by saying:

“Your evil name suits your evil nature. Only a wretch would inflict such cruelty on unresisting children. Touch them again and I will fell you to the floor.”

“Who are you?” burst out Diable. “How dare you come here and interfere with me? These children are mine—bought with my money and trained by me, and

are my means of living. Begone! Out of my house, or I will kill you!"

"I will not leave," calmly answered the gentleman, "until you give me your assurance that you will cease this violence. I am pledged before Heaven to relieve suffering, and to punish cruelty whenever and wherever they may be found. Beside, I now know who you are, and I know who is this child you call Lillie. I claim her as her lawful protector."

Nothing could exceed the amazement of Diable. Indeed, he was transformed almost into a demon. He shrieked: "Where do you come from?" with a look and tone of mingled wonder and hatred. "You set up a right to my flesh and blood!" he continued. "Let me see you, that I may find out who and what you are."

Again the two men regarded each other with a fixed and intense gaze. In silence there was a recognition which fed to additional ardor the flames on each breast. Diable at length broke forth:

"Begone! I know you. I hate you. Leave instantly or you die!"

"Diable, you know that I will not leave without this girl. Give her to me and I will depart. If you refuse, I will take her by force."

As he uttered these words, Diable exclaimed: "Your blood be on yourself," and sprang with a low cry upon his adversary, flinging against him the whole bulk of his vast body. The stranger stood the shock, and amid the screams of the girl, the two men were soon clasping each other in a fearful struggle. In the des-

perate contest, the walls shook and the windows rattled. Diable became first exhausted, owing to the superior skill and power of his adversary, and, under a rain of terrible blows, was covered with blood and lay almost dead on the floor. The stranger arose, felt the pulse of his prostrate foe, and, seeing that life was not in peril, turned round with anxious gaze to find the girl. His heart sank as he perceived her gone. The object of his search, just in his grasp, had vanished, perhaps forever. Years of weary waiting were in the agony of his glance. Perceiving pursuit impossible, he retired, and joining Ling, was followed by him to the hotel.

While this deadly contest had been progressing, the Chinaman, remembering the orders of his master, and not hearing his whistle, dared not interfere. Knowing the marvelous skill, strength and agility he had often seen displayed, he never for a moment doubted the issue. But as he had stood in the shadow of the alley, a lad of about eighteen, had paused before him, arrested by the noise of the struggle, and who seemed about to cry for help or to interfere, when Ling laid on the shoulder of the youth his giant hand, and held him fast in his grasp.

“Be stillee you!” he cried. “Stayee here you! Not one wordee sayee you! No Melliken youee, I see—from Japan, youee—your namee tellee me.”

“Tojo!” answered the lad, trembling with fear and anger.

“From Tokio, youee!” said Ling. “How longee in Mellika, youee?”

"I came from Japan when a child," replied Tojo, "and have been nearly ever since with Diable. Let me go and help him, or I will yell for the police."

"Youee no doee it," answered Ling, shaking the boy terribly, by way of warning.

The lad thus threatened was compelled to remain a quiet observer of the fierce fight. Soon, however, it had ended, and being released from the giant's grasp, he ran over the street, entered the door, and bent over his bleeding and prostrate master.

"Are you much hurt, Diable?" he inquired, as he stooped and held his ear near the lips of the bruised and bloody wretch, who faintly gasped, "Water! Tojo! Water!"

The lad sprang for a pitcher, poured out some water into a cup, and gave it to Diable, at the same time wetting a handkerchief and wiping the blood from the face and forehead of the suffering man. Diable soon revived, and rising and staggering to a rude bench, threw himself on it with a fearful imprecation on his conqueror.

"Curse him!" he exclaimed. "Curse his eyes, his heart, his head! Curse his family, his race, his country! Curse his emperor! Curse them all, to a thousand generations. Death to kings and aristocrats everywhere! The old shall pass away in blood to make place for the new. I will leave nothing, nothing! Ruin for the world shall be my cry forever!"

Having expended his muttered rage, with the tone and look of a demon he said: "Tojo! here! Tojo!"

The lad, starting at the sound of the savage voice, replied :

“Here I am, Diable ! What do you want ?”

“We must leave this place, Tojo !” he answered. “Leave this very night. That has just happened which will discover all and ruin all.”

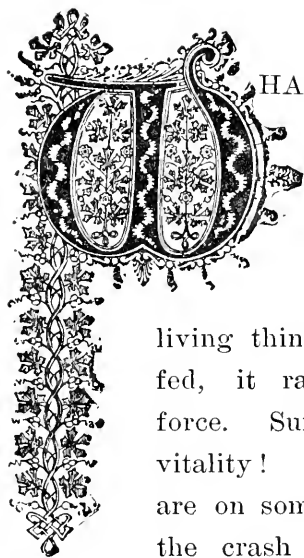
“But, Diable,” urged the boy, “it can’t be done. Your word is pledged. Don’t you remember you hired me to-night for the big house on the avenue. Dan Death and Billy Bully were to meet me when the clock struck one, and I was to climb up the back piazza, walk along the eave, open a fourth story window, go down stairs and unlock the front door, and bag a third of the catch. It can’t be, Diable. Our word was given, and I want the work and the stuff.”

“Curse your word !” cried Diable, in a rage. “You shall play ‘kid’ no longer. This night ends such business. I have enough for us both and we will retire while we can. My time and soul shall be given to vengeance against my enemy, and to killing kings, aristocrats and monopolists. I’ll never spare again. Tippoo and Lillie must leave the city immediately. We will go from this place this minute and seek new and better quarters, and in the morning I will explain to you my plans.”



CHAPTER II.

THE EAGLE.



WHAT a glorious creature is a locomotive! Did you ever feel it under you, as it flashed and thundered along the track, thrilling you with a sense of joy and power? It seemed to you a living thing. It breathed, it drank, it was fed, it ran, it palpitated with its giant force. Surely, these are the attributes of vitality! On the locomotive, you think you are on some vast obedient animal, and when the crash comes in blood, and death, and horror, it is the madness of the creature, rebelling against human control, which dashes to ruin all around it in a paroxysm of insane vengeance. The locomotive is yet the uniter of nations, the prophet of peace, the messenger of civilization, the herald of millennium, the conqueror of humanity, and the John the Baptist of Christianity, raising the valleys, leveling the mountains, and making the crooked straight and the rough plain for the monarch of the universe. It is hence the spell of its mystery penetrates into the consciousness of mankind.

It is not, therefore, strange that there was a holiday in Alma, when the largest and swiftest locomotive ever built in the country was pushed forth finished from the shop, and stood on the track in its majesty. Indeed, it had a royal look! In its very silence was a spell. What a contrast between that slumbering power and the fiery energy which was to fly through the air and flash over the earth! How bright each plate and band of brass! See those monster wheels, towering above the tallest men! A flame is beginning to glimmer in the furnace! Now, a circle of smoke rises, for the first time, from the stack and floats away into the heavens! Steam hisses! All will soon be ready for the thrilling race! A long expected hour has come, and a large group of workmen are surveying, with hope, love and admiration, the machine on which they have bestowed so much thought and labor.

John Standfast, master of the Alma shops, looked affectionately at the Eagle, examined a joint here and a plate yonder, peeped into the furnace, tried the steam-gauges, worked the lever of the throttle-valve, and went around, and under, and over the stately locomotive.

"Well! she is a beauty!" he exclaimed, with a species of paternal satisfaction. "She'll beat lighthin'! Reg'lar time, sixty mile an hour, and ninety on a pinch."

"Yes! John," said Jim Fly, "you've made an Eagle in our Alma shops that'll leave out of sight a Rocky Mountain bald-head, when he's flyin' for his



“They’ve cut me down to a dollar a day.”
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breakfast. I've seen many a fellow in the clouds that couldn't go as fast as I propose this mornin'."

"If our Eagle beats the Almighty's," impiously growled Ben Bunce, "who gets the profit? We do the work and our masters take the pay. Who put the hard knocks into this machine? The men, who get nothin' for their pains."

"Why, Bunce," replied Standfast, "is there no pleasure in makin' such a thing, and feelin' that you *can* make it? I've spent many a night in thinkin' it out, and many a day in workin' it out, and I wouldn't change my part in it for any stock or office of the company. We have health, comfort and a good conscience, and that's more than the fellows you scold always have."

"Curse 'em!" said Bunce. "They've cut me down to a dollar a day, and brought my wife and children to tough grub and rough wear, but their own champagne flows on, and their women's silks and dimons are jist as before these hard times—hard times for us slaves, but not for our owners."

A murmur of discontent, excited by these words, ran through the crowd. At this point Jim Fly, who was to be engineer of the Eagle on this grand trial-day, mounted the steps of the splendid machine, and, with a cock of his hat, a toss of his head, and a knowing squint, having first thrust out his cheeks with his tongue, said:

"Boys, it wont always be so. We fixed that fact at our meetin' last night, sure as John Standfast makes

you drive a boiler-rivet true. What I tell you now is certin as the noise sent before by a locomotive, when she whizzes at her best to tell you she's acomin'. We'll turn up owners after while, and I'll run this Eagle on my own account and have a jolly ride, responsible to Jim Fly."

"Take care, Jim," replied Standfast, "that's dangerous talk, and smacks of that infernal Diable. You'll *strike* yourself into trouble, *strike* money out of your pocket, *strike* your family into rags, and out of a good home. That's always the end of it, after all your meetins', and brags, and flags, and drinkins', and marchins'. You may have one ride of your own on the Eagle, but you'll pay for it with the loss of your place, and your character, and never get over it for the rest of your life."

"So you always talk," said Bunce, with a scowl on his face. "Your heart is on our side, but your head is with our owners. We are their slaves, and they grind out of us their big fortunes, and their good times, and, I tell you, American Workingmen are goin' to be free. In six months, a time is comin' that'll startle you. You can't stand fast with us, John, unless you stand loose from the monopolists."

Looks and words of approval were on the faces and lips of the gathering crowd of toilers, and were only repressed by the unpropitious time and place. The steam would soon be sufficient for the engines, and the President and his associates make their appearance, and enter their car already in waiting.

Just here said Sam Fead the fireman, who had been silently scouring a steam box :

"Boys, I've a word to say. Let Jim Fly tell us where the screw is we'd like to loose to-day, and I'll give it a few twists with his wrench, and let her jump the track, and pitch off the monopolists at the rate of sixty mile an hour, and bury our wrongs with 'em in the mud. Curse 'em, I'd like to see 'em heads down and heels up, stickin for the next ten year."

"You fool," answered Jim Fly, "aint you and me in the same craft? Where'll be our blood and brains, while they're turnin' summersets and landin' skulls in the earth and toes in the air? You don't catch me beatin' in my head for the fun of breakin' theirs."

"Yes!" cried Tim Driver, "many a time, when they've been flyin' in their palaces, and a dinin' and a winin' at our expense, I'd've let go a loose rail, or pull'd out a bad spike, if it hadnt been that our own fellows were at the brakes, the furnace, and the throttle-valve, and that I didnt want to spill their blood in the general crash. But they've pull'd down our pay agin while they keep up their own, and I'll find a way to be even with them yet, or I aint Tim Driver."

The sympathies of the men were evidently with this wild and wicked speech. One red-eyed, reckless, rollicking old man, and several young madcaps, all ready for change, whiskey and plunder, cried in suppressed tones :

"Down with the 'nopolists! down with aristocrats!

down with capital and up with labor ! Down with our masters and, curse 'em ! we'll wipe 'em out, and get our own in spite of money-bags and bagonets ! Hurrah for Diable and the Nillists !”

Standfast was alarmed at what he saw and heard. He knew that danger was brewing all over the country, but could not have believed the storm so near, as these advanced mutterings indicated. It was clear to him at a glance that the GRAND STRIKE had been organized, and that before many months, tempest and earthquake might be loosed in universal ruin. He saw, too, that European emissaries had been sowing evil seeds among the men, and that the baleful harvest would soon be ripe. Now his only hope was to extricate from the combination the laborers in his own shops, and possibly along the line of the road. While the Eagle was flaming and panting like a racer, eager for the strife and the prize, he mounted one of the steps, and said earnestly to the men, by whom he was trusted and respected :

“Boys, you're goin' wrong and you'll make yourselves trouble. Diable has been among you. I know his tracks. He's bad all through as his namesake. Keep clear of the devil and he'll keep clear of you. It may do to kill aristocrats in Europe, but I tell you dynamite-bombs won't take in America. They'll blow your own brains out. Diable tells you to wipe out the old in blood, and let the world begin over again. We *have* begun over again in this country. The Revolution was our new start. Every man here has his

rights, rich or poor, and a chance for the best our country can give. Manhood wins at last. Your sons may have the highest offices in the gift of the people, and you know it. Black and white, furrener and native-born are the same before the law, and God Almighty will take care of a country built on right and justice. Every man in this land may have a livin', and if he fails, the fault's his own. In no place on earth has the workman such comforts and privileges. Keep to your posts, boys; do your duty, and all will be well."

Standfast was one of themselves. An uneducated, silent, gifted man, who had risen by his own talent and energy. The men loved and respected him, and every word of his had weight, and more especially, since he was a thinker, and, usually, most sparing of his speech.

Jack Ruff, however, a sturdy and growling Englishman, esteemed for his skill in the foundry, was not to be silenced. He grumbled out:

"John, if we can't have better pay here, give me king, queen and nobility, as we 'ave in Hingland, above your mush-room railroaders. I respect an hold hoak more than a gourd that comes hup in a night and dies next mornin'. Down with your smoke-stack haristocracy! Tumble 'em into the ditch, and let 'em lie where they fall! If I'm to be ruled by haristocrats, I'll go back to hold Hingland, where kings are born to crowns, and nobles 'ave hancestors."

"And me to auld Ireland," said Shanty O'Brien.

"I'll be a goin' in a week, if the pay isn't bether. They're dhrivin' out the landlords, and pushin' Johnny Bull into the Irish sae, and, when it's over, I'll be gettin' an esthate myself. An Irish pell, with a little pouter, is good for arishtocrats, and a midnight dose they'll have in Amirica if they schrew down me pay another rid cent."

"Yah!" said Dutch Hans, "that be von trut; dey grind us in mine country, and dey grind us in dis. Te mills-stones be all de same here and tare. As te Diable say, te cure is der blood—dey must be viped out clean, and no seen more tan dat steam ven it is lost in te air."

Just here the venerable General Adam Sparker, President of the Company, with his son, Walter, and his son-in-law, Dr. Saul Bidman, appeared, and ended this dangerous conversation. All words and looks of discontent vanished instantly. The very sight of the General hushed every tempest. He was an old man of eighty, who had organized and established the road, but whose advanced age compelled him to resign the active duties of his office to his son, a young man of twenty-five, as first Vice-President, and to his son-in-law, long a widower, as second Vice-President. His ability, integrity and benevolence commanded universal respect. The old-fashioned, bright brass buttons of his blue cloth swallow-tail were not so lustrous as his reputation, and would have been yet more emblematical had they been silver, or even gold. The General was tall, slender and still erect, with a keen, eagle

eye, a fine Roman nose, a thin, firm lip, and the benevolent expression expected in a patriarch. He had not forgotten the anvil and hammer, with which he had first forged his fortune, and his gold had never, therefore, been a barrier between him and the people. Indeed, his was a model of Christian manhood. The Eagle had awakened in him the ardor of his youth, and he had summoned all his failing energies for this swiftest run ever made on the continent.

As General Sparker ascended the steps of his beautiful private car, supported on the right by Walter and on the left by Dr. Saul Bidman, cheers long and loud burst from the lips of the workmen, and when he reached the platform he acknowledged the compliment by a graceful wave of his hat, and the sparkle in his eye, and the smile on his countenance. Afterwards, when his two associates came out for a moment in the view of the crowd, an instantaneous change was visible on all faces. It seemed like the shadow of a cloud sweeping over fields brilliant in the beams of a summer sun.

Standfast took his place on the locomotive, with Jim Fly and Sam Fead, for the purpose of directing them and assuring the greatest attainable speed and safety. Amid the delighted shouts of the men the Eagle moved off gracefully, but ran slowly while testing and warming for her fiery race.

The quick eye of old General Sparker had detected discontent in the faces of the men, even when they were most vociferous in their cheers, and pressing the

little bell-tap on the side of his car, Standfast immediately responded to his call.

"John," he began, "I saw in the countenances of some of the Alma men what I did not like. I fear they mean mischief. Tell me the whole truth."

"General," replied Standfast, "I do not know all, but I know enough. I am afraid we are on the edge of an earthquake. A Railway strike has been organized over our land which must end in trouble we have never seen before. Some of the men talk wildly of even killing, burning and getting possession of the country.

"You surprise me, John," said the General. "What are your proofs? I can scarcely believe it, and yet I forget that I am so far outside of active duty that my opportunities of observing are not great. It is strange that Walter and the Doctor have given me no hint of this."

"I have too many proofs," replied Standfast. "Our only hope now is to keep our own fellows out of the combination. They have perfect faith in you, and love you much. But you know that they are children and easily drawn aside. There is a Nihilist called Diabole who will come among them, and who does great harm."

"John," answered the General, "we have no time to talk of this now, but you will stand by me, I am sure, whatever may happen. I will see you again about it. Here, take my hand and pledge me that you will be faithful to me and the Road."

Standfast extended his hand, which was grasped by

that of the General, and both men knew that this signified fidelity even unto death.

"Now," resumed the noble old man, "I want to talk a little with Walter and Dr. Bidman. In about ten minutes I will be through, and then you must put the Eagle to her best speed and beat all America this morning."

John retired as requested, having first called Walter Sparker and Dr. Saul Bidman from the opposite end of the car to chairs near the General.

"Walter," began his father, "my curiosity is excited. Did you notice that fine-looking young man and beautiful girl standing in Standfast's door as our carriage drove by this morning? If you know, tell me who they are?"

Young Sparker was visibly embarrassed. He blushed and stammered, but at last said with great constraint:

"I saw there Edward Stewart, our new mechanical engineer, and Belle Standfast, the only daughter of John. These, I suppose, are the persons you mean."

"That young fellow pleased me greatly," replied the General, musingly. "He has a marked and noble face, and I must inquire about him. My interest is unusual, and I cannot but think he is to be useful to the road. The girl is the prettiest picture I ever saw. I did not know John had such a daughter. Another proof how fast I am getting out of the way of this world. And now, Bidman, I must express my surprise that I have never heard anything of this threatened strike."

"I did not wish to trouble you, General, and we are prepared for the rascals," replied Bidman, morosely.

"Prepared!" said the General, displeased and alarmed. "Prepared! Have matters gone so far, and I in ignorance of everything! I do not like this at all!"

Bidman answered sullenly:

"I thought we could manage the affair, and it would only distress you for nothing. If the rascals try to carry out their plans, they will soon be wiped out. We have made arrangements both with the State and Federal authorities, and my house is already like a fort."

"Walter!" burst out the General, "are you party to this concealment? And, pray, if the peril is so great, why have I not been notified? I don't like this mystery!"

"Father!" said Walter, trembling with fear and embarrassment; "I have already had guns and cartridges placed in our attic."

"Guns and cartridges!" thundered the General, with all the fiery energy of his early manhood, "and I know nothing of it! In my own house, too! The authorities apprised, and I ignorant! I tell you there shall be no appeal to arms. Our men can be controlled by kindness and wisdom. You will see, old as I am, that my influence is not buried, although you treat me as if my body was."

"General," replied Bidman, with an impatient scowl, "I have studied this question, and there is but one way

to settle it. If these fellows burn and kill, as they threaten, we must meet them with balls and bayonets. I am ready for the rascals. I'll shoot down like a dog any man who attacks me or my property."

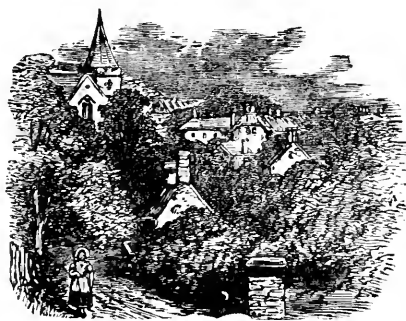
"You are going wrong, Bidman," said the General, subduing his anger with a great effort, "and you are leading others wrong. I must see to this myself. Beware of what you do and say! Your plans and feelings will lead to blood and ruin. You cannot govern men in this way. Only can you control them by justice and benevolence. Let me say to you, as if with my dying lips, never depart from the principles on which I have founded our company! Never discriminate in freights, either for individuals or corporations! Never force a man to sell you his property because you chance to want it! Never manufacture an article for your own profit at the expense of other stockholders! Never declare a dividend you have not earned! Never defile yourselves or others by bribes! Never seek to destroy men that you may rise on their ruin! Above all, avoid combinations to control prices! The Universal Oil Company will blast you if you touch it. Always remember that we are common carriers, bound by law and right to convey all freights at reasonable prices! Do not forget that I myself am sprung from the people, and bound to our workmen by the strongest sympathies! Be just and fear not! Another panic will sweep this country like an earthquake, and engulf nearly all our great railway companies, and nothing will save us from the general ruin but the honesty and wisdom of our

management. This is the policy that I bequeath to my family, and I demand that it be observed."

The General spoke with the glow and vehemence of an old prophet, while Walter Sparker and Dr. Saul Bidman looked confused and almost confounded. But just here the designated ten minutes had expired, and the Eagle was beginning to feel the effects of the command to John Standfast.

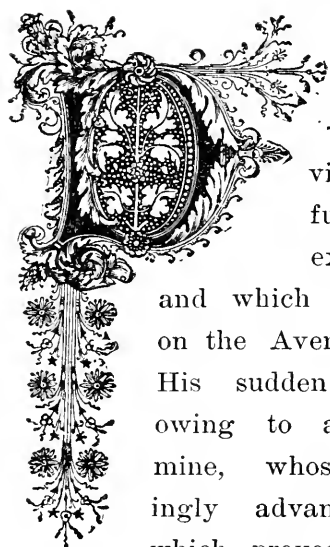
Yes; the speed was indeed, wonderful. General Sparker, kindled into new strength by his own true words, seemed to have returned to him the ardor and vigor of his youth. He insisted on standing with the men on the locomotive, and enjoying fully the sense of his triumph. It was a glorious moment for the venerable man—the crown and consummation of a noble, active life. See him with his beaming eye, his dilated nostril, his erect form, as he stands with folded arms, and his white locks streaming in the wind created by the flight of the Eagle! The people along the line have been notified by telegram, and at all the stations are gazing and shouting with excitement. A whirlwind is rushing by. The engines are frantic; the wheels flash like the lightning; beneath is a tempestuous vortex, dangerous as a maelstrom. First, a warning noise, then an instant thunder, and all is silence again, while the Eagle has vanished in the opposite direction. No bird of Jove above cloud or mountain summit, had ever so swift a flight, unless when dropping down through the air like the lightning-bolt on its prey.

All were exhilarated by the triumph, and when the Eagle returned in the evening, she had attained a speed unexampled in America. A telegram had announced the splendid achievement, and she was saluted with cries of victory. Alma was illuminated, and in the blaze of torch and window, the whole population abandoned itself to entertainments generously provided by the Company. While the lights flamed and the cheer was distributed, no signs could be traced of the discontent which was to result in a fearful commotion of the social and political elements.



CHAPTER III.

THE BROTHERS.



DEARABLE, on the very night of the fierce battle I have previously described, moved into furnished apartments he had examined a few days before, and which were in an old brick house on the Avenue near Washington Square. His sudden improvement in fortune was owing to an investment in a Colorado mine, whose stock had been surprisingly advanced by discoveries of gold, which proved to be exhaustless and almost fabulous. In his neat and airy rooms, and new attire, he could scarcely be recognized, even by the police, and in consequence of his transformation, we will hereafter call him by his true name, Ruric, which he had inherited in a land where rank and wealth had promised him a splendid future. But while changed in situation and appearance, burning in his heart was the same wild flame of hatred and revenge. He dreamed of the ruin of the present over which he always saw a cloud, red with blood. Indeed, he had become a maniac of destruction. He

would make the world like an extinct volcano, and sink it into abysses from which it would arise with another soil, and for another life. All his increased resources were but enlarged means of ruin. Lillie, Tippoo, Tojo, were no longer necessary for his living, but he henceforth had for them other plans, caused by the knowledge that the mysterious stranger, whom of mortals he most detested, was a foe whom he had to baffle, or be himself destroyed. Torture and death were preferable to the triumph of his enemy. His chief aim now was to get Lillie out of the way of a vigorous and vigilant pursuit he saw inevitable. Calling Tojo to his room, after long reflection, he said to him:

“My boy, you must leave your old ways and friends. Drop your slang, and talk as you were taught in the Public School before you began to play ‘kid.’ I shall need all the intelligence your early education gives you. Unite your Japanese wit to your American training, and forget everything in your past, but your lessons of obedience to my commands. Hereafter call me ‘Master,’ and tell Lillie and Tippoo to do the same.”

It was marvelous how speedily, in consequence of this direction, the apt lad transformed himself in dress, speech and manners, and accommodated his whole nature to the requirements of his changed conditions.

Not long afterwards Ruric said to him:

“Tojo, do you remember the Chinaman whose big hand grasped your shoulder and held you back on the night I had my fight with that infernal stranger?”

The lad's face grew black with rage and he ground his teeth as he replied :

"Remember him! Master, I have his marks on my flesh. He is my enemy and must feel my knife. Once, when I was a child, a Chinese junk anchored before our village, which the sailors burned, after killing my father and my mother and taking captive my sister. We were of noble blood, but that night brought us to ruin. I alone escaped by hiding in a cave of a mountain. Ling's hand brought back the wrongs of my boyhood, and renewed my hatred of his race."

"And the stranger he serves," exclaimed Ruric, "is my deadliest enemy."

"If he is yours, Master, he is mine," cried Tojo. "We will hate them together and have our revenge."

"That, now, is our business," said Ruric. "You must not fail to obey me, as you have always done; our change of plans and circumstances has made this even more necessary than before."

"Master," answered Tojo, "it will be hard to forget the lessons I have been so many years learning. They have been well beaten into me, I think."

"I am satisfied," said Ruric, smiling grimly. "Have you taught Lillie and Tippoo what I expect them to do? Unless we have them under good control before they start, the birds will take wing and leave us when I lift my hand from their string. I incur a great hazard in sending them away so far from me on this expedition, and yet it seems the best course possible."

"Master," replied Tojo, "they have had their lessons day and night, and they are scared lambs, I tell you, sure as ever I was a kid. Often I threaten them with death if they run away, and fire a pistol over their heads to frighten them. In the night I waken them by rolling a cannon ball over the floor above them and make hideous noises, shrieking, howling, groaning, until they are nearly crazy with fear. Just before they start I will let them have it worse than ever, and I hope you will scold and scare them like thunder."

"I am satisfied, Tojo," said Ruric. "You have managed admirably and I have no doubt can be entrusted with our difficult enterprise. I will give you more careful instructions and the exact route to be pursued. Let Tippoo take his harp, and Lillie her guitar, and teach them all the tricks you can to help them pay their expenses and keep them employed. Now go, and call them to me."

After Tojo had left him, Ruric paced the floor in a fearful agitation. It had been difficult to decide how he might elude the pursuit of the girl. Solitary confinement would be attended with many dangers, and escape over the ocean by even more. After long hesitation, it was decided to send the children together into different parts of the country, disguised and with their instruments, under the occasional supervision of Tojo, while Ruric himself was to hold in his own hand the threads of all movements and give his directions from New York. But the course was full

of perils. Could Lillie and Tippoo be controlled? Would not their new and wide liberty break down their old and powerful habits of obedience? Would they not escape? Might not Tojo himself prove false and sell his information for a bribe—certain to be large and tempting? Ruric considered and answered all these questions. He was not prepared himself to leave the country on account of his Nihilistic schemes. For the girl he had reserved a fate too terrible for mention, and which was to bring the bliss of a supreme revenge. All evil passions were clouding his soul and working in his face when the boy and the girl appeared in answer to his summons. He burst out upon them as they stood trembling before him:

“You imps, you drones, you thieves, you devils, do you know what I want with you?”

“Yes, Master,” said Tippoo. “Tojo has told us all and we understand it.”

“Will you obey me, you vermin?” he cried. “Will you work as hard for me when I cannot see you as here where I made you settle every night? Will you send me all the money you earn? Or will you try to run away? Beware! Go where you will, Diable will see you with his eye and reach you with his hand. The lightning will be too quick for you. Besides, Tojo will visit you when you least expect it, and if he finds you loitering, or cheating, I’ll tumble you into the fire and burn your heads off. Be careful,” he thundered, “or I’ll kill both of you and throw you to the dogs.”

The children grew pale before this savage rage which revived all the horrors of their servitude during so many years. Ever had they been haunted, even in their dreams, by the image of Diable, and they feared him as they dreaded ghosts and goblins. Across even a continent, they were to feel his spell shaping their acts and molding their lives. Tippoo stammered out :

"You know, master, we dare not disobey you. We would be afraid in any part of the country, knowing your eye is always on us. You could find us deep in the ground or in the bottom of the ocean. Do not beat us, for we will do what you say without it."

"Don't lie to me," he shrieked. "I'll watch you, night and day. My spies will be always about you. The telegraph will not let you hide or run. In a few hours the railway can take me anywhere. You are just as safe for me in San Francisco as in New York. Do you know where you are to go for the next three months?"

"We do, master," said Tippoo.

"And when you stop in a town, what are you to do first?"

"Go to the Post Office."

"And what next?"

"Inquire at the Telegraph Station."

"And what third?"

"Send our money every Saturday by mail to Tojo in New York."

"In what places are you going to stop?"

"Where you tell us on your paper, or send word by Tojo."

"Well! I see you understand. Whether you get it by letter, or by telegram, or in thunder and in lightning, or the devil hands it to you in the storm, remember that my will is your law and your life. Disobey me, and you will not forget it soon! Begone and beware!"

The children left the apartment in haste and pallid with their fright.

While these things were occurring in the house, you might have seen, walking down the avenue, a man who was the image of Ruric in face and form, but who, in expression, differed from him widely as possible. He wore the dress of a Priest of the Russian Church, and his countenance breathed peace and beamed benevolence. People gazed at him as a superb specimen of manhood. In his port and person was that majesty which often distinguishes the highest order of Russian noblemen. He was evidently a twin brother of Ruric. Having rung the bell, he stood waiting on the step with an anxious and bewildered look, until, the servant appearing, he sent up his card, and soon received an invitation to a private parlor. He took a chair, gazed around with surprise, and then seemed absorbed in his meditations. Soon Ruric entered, and, holding out his hand, said gruffly:

"Good morning, Nicolai!"

"Good morning, brother," was the response, with a sweet tone and smile.

"I suppose," returned Ruric, "that I am indebted to my changed situation for this unexpected visit."

"You do me injustice," replied Nicolai. "Did I not persist in going to your old home until you forbade me? Death alone can sever the tie between us. Can we forget our father, our mother, our home, our happy boyhood? No more can I forget you. Differing as we do in our principles and our practice, you are yet always my *brother*."

Hard as was the heart of Ruric he was touched by the tone and look of fraternal affection. All the tender recollections of the past rushed before him, and he was visibly moved. Love thus brings some sympathetic drop from the rock of the most abandoned soul.

"It might not have been thus," he said, sadly; "it might not have been thus. But you know my wrongs, my sufferings, my deep and terrible provocations."

"I know all," replied Nicolai, "and I sympathise with all. The mystery of your misery is too deep for me. But we are born into this world not to know so much as to learn. A dark cloud obscures this human life of ours. In endurance I have found rest. Otherwise, I should be like yourself, a volcano—without, ice; within, fire and ruin."

"Did I not begin," interrupted Ruric, "in the university with golden visions? Russia was my dream; when emancipation came, how gladly I sacrificed my serfs and my lands to the will of my Emperor! I impoverished myself for liberty. What followed? Terrified by the

burst of the waters he had released, the tyranny of the Czar erected more formidable barriers. Trial by jury, discussion in our local assemblies, the freedom of the press, the privileges of the universities, were suppressed, and Russia was ruled by the spy and the soldier. My enthusiastic words for liberty, excited by the Emperor himself, were turned against me by the fears of the tyrant. I was seized in my youth, and buried in the solitudes of polar forests, and doomed to labor like a slave and a criminal in the depths of the earth. Then came the long, horrible months of my wanderings amid snows and savages, until my soul swam in visions of blood. Exiled in this land of liberty, I have been forced to earn my bread by mingling with thieves and murderers. Who robbed me? who cursed me? who degraded me? who banished me? who made me what I am? And what is left to us? We have no armies. All governments, monarchical and republican, combine against us in upholding wrong. Poison, bullet, dagger, dynamite, death to kings and aristocrats—ruin to all creeds and governments—the old obliterated for the new—in this despair is our hope. I live for blood and vengeance.”

“But, Ruric,” replied Nicolai, “I have suffered deeply and darkly as yourself. Exile, poverty, cold, hunger, imprisonment, were mine as well as yours. Yet, in forgiveness and submission, I have found peace. I am taught by the Church to obey my rulers, and in this I have rest and deliverance. Joy shines over the altar. Hope of a better life enables me to endure the

evils inseparable from this. Earth can only be reformed by those fires of its dissolution which are to convert it into heaven. Here! oh, here alone can be hushed forever the billows and the tempests of any human soul."

"This solution may suit you," he replied savagely, "but it does not suit me. I hate your Bible; I curse your Church; I would obliterate your God; I hope, like a bubble on the ocean, to sink back into the abyss, and mingle myself with the unconscious universe from which I sprang. Nature is my God, and my immortality in our perpetuated humanity."

"You will see this differently hereafter," said Nicolai, with touching sympathy. "After years of agony, perhaps of madness, your eyes will be opened to the truth."

"Never! Nicolai, never!" he exclaimed, with a fearful emphasis. "The same air and soil makes the poison that kills and the nectar that exhilarates—the same food is converted into a snake or into a man, and by a similar arrangement of your benevolent Deity, what has sunk me into a devil has exalted you to an angel. I must follow this kind and wise ordination. My path lies through blood to ruin, and when my ghastly work is over, the gases, solids and liquids of this huge human carcass will resolve themselves into the unconscious earth and air from which they arose."

"Brother!" said Nicolai, with the sigh and expression of an ineffable sadness, "I feel your taunt, although I will not answer it, as I sympathise with your suffer-

ing, although I cannot relieve it. Your time has not yet come, and my arguments now would be vain. But we are of the same blood and home, and the same loves and memories must linger together in our hearts. Do you recollect the little chamber up the winding stair of the old tower, in which we slept side by side when children?"

"Do I recollect it?" he answered, with a smile like sunshine through a cloud. "Yes, well! And the beautiful view of the wide river, the rich valley, the fringe of forest, and the blue hills beyond!"

"Whose step was it, Ruric," Nicolai resumed, "we heard gently on the stairs? Who, in the darkness, entered the chamber when we were supposed to be asleep? Who, placing on each brow a soft, white hand, while kneeling at our bed, commended her boys to Heaven? It was our mother! Oh, the sweetness and purity of that moment! You have not forgotten it, brother. Those prayers will save. Our good angel smiles on you now from Paradise, watches your steps, and follows you with blessings."

Lost to almost all other tender feelings, the Nihilist yielded to the spell of a mother's name and memory. His lip quivered, and the tear was on his cheek as he turned away his face to conceal his emotion. Recovering himself with a strong effort, he said:

"Nicolai, I will hear no more of this. My heart shall not betray my head. I am signed, sealed, and delivered to my work. A recollection of childhood cannot disturb a purpose dark and deep as death. You

may move my tears, but you cannot shake my resolve or turn me from my mission."

"Oh, Ruric," replied Nicolai, tenderly, "art thou the representative of thine own opinions? Nothing lives in thee but hopeless misery. What, then, the root bearing such a fruit? Once there was above thee the sun of thy youth, shining over earth and sky, with what a brilliance of glory! Now, all around thee is a midnight."

"I feel my degradation," he said, fiercely. "I have been driven for bread to herd with the vilest of the land, and to make revenge the goal of my life. But it is not thus with my compatriots at home. Nobles and peasants have enlisted together in our cause. Youths near the throne stand with the ploughman and the artisan. Girls of princely birth and in the flower of beauty are ready with pistol, shell, dagger, poison, to extirpate tyrants. Their lives are pure, their aims are lofty, their souls are consecrated to their dream and idol—humanity. The best of the empire are animated with the sublime despair of martyrs. Nor are we confined to Russia. We are banded over the world to destroy the old and consummate the new. To such extremities are we driven by our tyrants."

"Alas, brother," said Nicolai, "I feel more and more how powerless my arguments and my persuasions. The sacred emotions I have excited are soon succeeded by your passions, while your purpose is unchanged. Penitence lies deeper than the tear. Will and conscience are at the roots of human character. And now I am

forced to touch the most sensitive spot of your nature."

"Nicolai, beware!" he cried. "You are beginning to talk like an American Protestant. I want no preachings, since I believe neither in your Church nor your God. Like the torrent, I must rush forward to the abyss, and make the plunge my fate ordains."

"But will you not do *right*, brother?" inquired Nicolai. "*Simply do right*. Begin with your enemy, and restore what is his by the most sacred ties of nature."

"Ha! I understand you now," he exclaimed, with rising rage. "You are in league with my foe, and came here by his counsel and for his interest as his emissary. This cancels all my obligations and changes all the fraternal feeling you kindled in my heart. I renounce you and I reject your mediation."

"Ruric, I implore you to give me the girl this very moment. You have made her mother a maniac, and sent her to her grave; you have turned her home to desolation, and driven forth her father an exile and a wanderer for years. Only within a few days have we discovered that you are the cause of these agonies. Surely you have revenge enough. Now be just and restore, and your future will yet have light and peace."

At these words a cloud from below seemed to envelop Ruric, and through it his rage flamed like the storm-lightnings. He was at first too much agitated for utterance, but after a few moments of ominous silence the tempest burst forth.

“You have learned from my enemy the secret of my life. For this, as I hate him, so will I hate you. You may have my flesh, my blood, my eye, my heart, my life a thousand times, but the girl, never!”

“Pause, brother,” interposed Nicolai, gently. “A mother crazed and killed, a house ruined, a father miserable in his despairing sorrow—this should glut even thy vengeance! But these are not the arguments I would use. I would start you on a new path beginning in the right, and which will terminate in heaven itself.”

“You preach in vain,” he answered, furiously. “I will hear no more. I know no right, no obligation, since I believe in no God and no hereafter. The drop your affection elicited from the rock has frozen into ice harder than the old flint itself.”

“But consider your danger, Ruric,” he replied with firmness. “Pursuit is inevitable. Your life will be searched, your connections here discovered, and your misdeeds punished. The police will soon be on your track. I am here not only to save you from your sin, but to warn you of your peril, and deliver you from the doom of a criminal. All the power of two great nations will be combined against you, so that escape will be impossible.”

“I defy them all,” he exclaimed, with fierce triumph, “and I will baffle them all. You have suspicions, but no proofs. If there were a hell and I on the edge of its flames, heaven could not tempt me from my prize. I have watched her for years as the gardener nurses the

bloom and flavor of the ripening peach, and soon the hour of supreme bliss and vengeance will be mine. You cannot rob me of Paradise."

As he spoke these words the fiend in him suppressed all that was good and hurled him back into the old abyss of his frightful passions. Hell ruled him as her own. His look of lust, mingled with diabolical hate, pierced the soul of Nicolai. He saw the terrible chasm at the feet of the girl, while above it and gazing down on the irretrievable ruin stood a father in the agony of despair.

"Ruric," he cried, with ineffable sorrow and disgust, "you cannot mean this. It cannot be that you are gloating at once over the wreck of the daughter and the pang of the father. This is the work of a devil. It is more black than hell itself."

"But it is my joy and prize, Nicolai. I glory in it. Your Almighty shall not stop me. I swear I will have the vengeance for which I have so long toiled and waited."

"And I swear," said Nicolai, "that I will defeat you. My God will help me, and snatch your victim from your arms. I will triumph. Mark it, I will triumph."

The brothers parted. Born in the same hour, nurtured at the same breast, kissed by the same lips, taught by the same maternal love, and tried by the same temptations, the one was the impersonation of all that was good in human nature and the other of all that was evil.



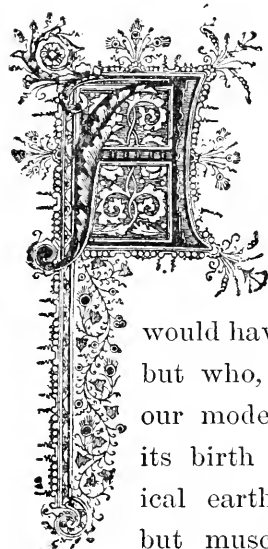


"In the morning he walked forth with the dawn to calm his soul."

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CHAPTER IV.

EDWARD STEWART.



MID the blood and storm and flame of the French Revolution, men, themselves destined to the guillotine, founded the Polytechnic School of Paris, making thus a place and a work in the world for thousands who would have otherwise been intellectual orphans, but who, as engineers, have been a power in our modern society. Technical education had its birth in the throes of a social and political earthquake. It trains not only mind, but muscle; it follows the lecture-room by the workshop, and, with a discipline equal to the classical in breadth and strength, it graduates youth who are at once brothers to the scholar and brothers to the laborer, and thus creates new links, binding together the extremes of society.

As an engineer, Edward Stewart was the outgrowth of such a technical school. His father was a naval officer, who had died in battle, and left his widow means just sufficient to educate her son. Thus, with the refinements of good birth and a lovely home, he had every stimulus to manly exertion. For math-

ematics, mechanics and drafting, he had distinguished ability. Indeed, he just missed the creative genius of the artist, as shown by his exquisite skill in caricature. His trained faculties, joined to the shrewd and long experience of John Standfast, had given a new impulse to the Alma shops, destined to excel those of the whole country. The two men, so different in birth, gifts and education, soon learned to respect each other, and became confidential friends.

Stewart was nearly six feet in height, healthful and muscular, with a slight stoop in his shoulders, and a nose, chin, mouth and moustache, ladies, young and old, pronounced perfect. A quiet humor lurked in his eye and on his lip, and often would sparkle through his natural reserve, to enliven what he said and wrote. He was manly, courageous, and, while modest and unobtrusive, equal to any emergency. Although a collegiate graduate, his strong sense and kind heart gave him a control over the workmen superior to that even of Standfast. Having received a message from General Sparker, Edward was now awaiting in the parlor the appearance of that venerated gentleman, who had been strangely drawn to him by the first passing glance, and who, now entering, said:

“Good-morning, Mr. Stewart. I am sorry to have detained you, but you know that age is sluggish in its motions, and that I can now plead eighty years as my numerous apologies.”

“Good-morning, General,” answered Edward, with a look and voice of profound respect. “Do not think

of the delay. I am in your employment and my whole time and service are at your disposal."

"I have examined your drawings, Mr. Stewart. Your touch is fine, and your eye trained and delicate. Your inventions will be of great value. The first is a vast improvement on our old air-brake, and the last will obviate the jolting and jangling of stoppage better than anything I have ever seen. But the best proof is success, and I am determined to witness the experiment myself."

"You do me great honor," said Edward, glowing and blushing with pleasure. "I will do all in my power to vindicate your judgment and fulfill your prediction."

"When can you have three cars and a locomotive prepared so as to ensure your experiment?" inquired the General.

"A week will give me ample time."

"Let it be so, Mr. Stewart. It will suit my health and strength better to be with you in the morning." Then, looking at his watch, the General continued: "It is now just ten o'clock. Be ready precisely one week from this hour. You know that with me punctuality is a virtue. It has been a chief element of my success."

"You may depend upon me, General," said Edward. "Every energy of brain and muscle shall be taxed to meet your appointment."

"And now," resumed the wise and venerable man, "I believe that you have inventive genius and complete

education. These are great gifts seldom united. I will drop in your ear a hint which results from my long experience. Apply yourself to discoveries in electricity as a motive power. It is destined to light the world, to heat the world, and to drive the world. The expense of acids and metals is objected, but see there, Mr. Stewart!" said the General, with a sparkling eye and illuminated face, pointing through the window. "See yon clouds! What power flashes from one to the other! No acid, no zinc, no copper! Only two strata of mists! The upper cold, the lower warm! Hence unequal temperature develops the fluid. What nature does there now in yon heavens science can and will do in moving the locomotive, the steam-vessel, and all the machineries of our world. As water has furnished steam, so water will furnish electricity, and be the mother of light, heat and power in the operations of man which are to make a millennial rest for our humanity."

This was the simple eloquence of truth. General Sparker glowed as he spoke like an old prophet. Stewart felt his heart beating with a sympathetic joy. What a fire the enthusiasm of age kindles in the generous and responsive breast of youth! How sacred the tie created in that memorable hour! General Sparker would have given his whole fortune had his only son, Walter, possessed the natural and acquired gifts of Edward Stewart, and been capable of the same noble thoughts, feelings and aspirations. But money can no more create talent than it can conquer death.

After a few other words the men parted, and Edward Stewart went to the shops to prepare for his toil and his triumph.

But he was to encounter difficulties. No bright morning was ever unfollowed by a midnight. Evil lurks in everything. Bidman, like a genius of spite, had overheard in the study the conversation of the parlor. Envy, jealousy, rage, were burning in his sinister heart. His beefy chin and neck grew red with rising blood, and the features of his face reflected the passions of his soul. Descended from a long line of ignorant doctors, celebrated for practices by steam, roots and herbs, he was, like them, an adventurer in the world. He had endeavored to ground a medical education on an uncultured mind, but finding his diploma no passport to success, he soon followed his congenial bent toward artful bargains, and rose to wealth by plausible cunning and a marriage to the daughter of General Sparker, whom he had long since fretted and disgusted to her grave. The General himself soon measured the man, and the alliance was the thorn and blot of his life. In addition to his cold greed and selfishness, Bidman was intensely and amusingly ashamed of his family history, and longed to obliterate it from his own memory and that of society. He was the most loathsome type of the American snob.

Bidman, leaving General Sparker's mansion, walked in haste to the office of Walter, who, seeing his agitation, said :

"What's the matter, Saul? You look as if some man had punched a hole in your pictures, or hurled a brick-bat into your conservatory, or cast a reflection on your ancestors."

"Curse you, Walter," he said sharply. "It's no time for fun, I tell you. Edward Stewart will be your ruin and mine yet, before the General gets under ground."

"Nonsense, Bidman," returned Walter, laughing. "You're scared, as sometimes when you've a fit of the colic, and lie swearing and shivering from fear of your shroud and coffin."

"Stop this, Walter," he cried, in his annoyance and rage. "If we don't get ahead of this upstart he'll tumble you and me into a ditch like a train off the track."

"Why, Saul," replied Walter, with a curl of his lip, "fear and suspicion make you a fool. Tumble you and me into the ditch! Yes! When he can kick yon forty-two ton locomotive from that bridge into the river. What's up now?"

"Your father has examined the fellow's cursed drawings, given him an order for three cars and a locomotive for his experiment, and appointed a day for a trial which he is to witness himself. I heard their conversation in his study and they are becoming faster friends than is for your interest or mine."

"That *is* serious," said Walter. "I have a fear of harm, myself. But what are you going to do about it, brother Saul? I want to know."

"Do you remember, Walter, when Prince Tolono visited our Alma shops?"

"I do that," replied Walter, amused at the recollection. "We expected the coming Majesty of a European Kingdom, uniting in himself the royal blood of Bourbons, Hapsburgs, and Braganzas, to appear in some state, even in this republican land, worthy of his illustrious throne and ancestry. I remember his slouched hat, his ungloved fingers, and unravelled pantaloons, as he emerged from a trap-door after examining greasy machinery, rubbing his princely hands with a great wad of oakum."

"Well!" replied Bidman, true to the inherited instincts of ancestral root-doctors, herb-doctors, and steam-doctors, "I hated the sight of him from the first. Too democratic for my tastes, Walter!"

"Yes! Saul, he did look common beside your topaz watch-seal, diamond breast-pin, and republican make-up generally. But what is all this to the point?"

"And your father, when he dined in the car, would not invite me to the table," said Bidman, scowling at the recollection, "where this royal upstart sat alone bolting his meal, like a hungry track-mender after a day's round over the rails. But I had my revenge on them both."

"What, Saul," replied Walter, "on father and Prince Tolono?"

"Yes, on them both," answered Bidman with a low leer.

"But how, Saul. Tell me how?"

"It was a hot July morning. The old man and the Prince were walking side by side, looking and feeling large. My coachman, Sam, was driving me a little behind them with my splendid carriage and gold-mounted blacks. I gave him a touch and a wink, and on he drove like a train behind time, and raised a cloud of dust that powdered the General and his noble guest as if they had been dragged on their backs along a dry road in Summer for a half-a-mile. I tell you, it was one of the sweetest moments of my life, if it was your father, who has never loved me any more than I have loved him."

"Well, Saul," replied Walter, "I don't like this. If you have no affection for father, I have, and, bad as I am, curse me, if I don't venerate him as if he were an old Scripture Patriarch. Still, I don't like this alliance with Edward Stewart whom he prefers to me, his own flesh and blood. But I don't see the point of your story yet."

"It's this, Walter," replied Bidman, with an expression of mean cunning. "We must throw dust once more in the old man's eyes, and blind Edward Stewart, so that they'll both fall into the ditch together and lose their love for each other. We must spoil this pretty experiment."

"Well, Saul," replied young Sparker, musingly and sadly. "You know and I know that I ought to please my father and not deceive him. Yet I seem sold to you and the devil. I neglect my business, pursue my pleasure, make my position uncertain, and then use your

tricks to make it secure and myself worse. But I follow my evil genius with my eyes open, and swear I'll blow up this infernal Stewart, if you and I explode with him, and come down from air to earth in bits of flesh and bone small as your eyes or even your soul."

Bidman winced under the insult, but as his purpose was gained said nothing.

"Walter," he began, "what workmen will Stewart want to help him?"

"Ned Taylor and Jack Jones."

"Send down an order to transfer them to the shops at the other end of the road."

"All right! I'll do it."

"Then see that the cars and the locomotive on which he wants to operate are removed too. That will bring him behind time, disorder his calculations, and incur your father's displeasure, and the old man will not likely venture another experiment. When he's out of the game we can easily dispose of your friend Stewart."

"Worthy of yourself, Saul," said Walter with a sneer. "You can beat your master, Satan, in a trick any day, and fool me into it against sense, heart and conscience. Our pay-day will come, and you and I go to protest before we know it. Yet, curse me, this Edward Stewart is after my place and my girl, and I'll ruin him, if I kill myself."

"Ha!" said Bidman with surprise. "Belle Standfast's in the case, too! Better and better! Now I'm sure we're on the right track. In three months this

fellow will be out of the shops, and leave the way clear for love and beauty."

We have seen what a glow the encouragements of General Sparker had kindled in Edward Stewart. He was neither excitable nor imaginative, but to have his inventions approved by so celebrated a Railway President, and ordered for their trial was a signal triumph for so young a man. But his bright visions were soon clouded. Suddenly mountains closed him round.

John Standfast, in an adjoining room, had been compelled to overhear the conversation between Saul Bidman, and Walter Sparker. He instantly resolved to assist Stewart, and not suffer him to be the victim of a plot so infamous. When he had communicated his information, for a moment, his friend stood aghast. An abyss was opening at his feet, and gloom gathering over his head. Envy, jealousy, hatred were combining for his overthrow. But he felt strong in his manly innocence. His path was to be through trials and bitter oppositions. Yet his whole soul was aroused to perseverance and to triumph.

"Well, Mr. Stewart," said John, after a long silence, "you seem like a locomotive after a collision, when it finds it convenient to stand still."

"What can I do, Mr. Standfast?" cried Edward. I cannot give it up, and yet, if I enter into a contest with the first and second Vice-Presidents I seem almost certain to be wrecked. General Sparker is too old to protect me. I feel that this is to be the last

service he can render me. When he is out of the way, Bidman and young Sparker will be omnipotent for ruin."

"I have a plan for you," answered Standfast, quietly; "and I know that you will win in the end. As a practical mechanic, I have examined your inventions, and, like General Sparker, am sure of their success. It is not likely that too such old heads as ours will be misled by a sham. Besides, I understand you, and respect you, and feel that it is my duty to help you against two men I know to be bad. Bidman is chiefly to blame, and if he is not stopped he'll soon wreck Walter Sparker, and the road along with him."

"Thank you, John," said Edward, grasping his friend's hand; "thank you a thousand times. This is a debt I can never pay. Where you might have met me with suspicion and jealousy as a rival you treat me as an old friend. God bless you for your generosity! You have lifted a mountain off my heart already. What do you propose?"

"When the order comes to remove the men," replied Standfast, "say nothing but let them go. In the same way make no objection to sending off the locomotive and the three cars assigned by General Sparker for your experiment. There are two old passenger coaches, a sleeper called Victory and a locomotive named Experiment, all so much out of repair no one will think of them. You and I will work at nights and quietly prepare these. No one will dream

of examining them or noticing our improvements. When General Sparker presents himself to witness the experiment we will be ready for him, and without having had any trouble with your enemies."

"But, Mr. Standfast," said Edward, shaking his head with a look of distress, "trouble will come soon enough, and not only for me but for you. This will be known, and you will excite the deadly hatred of two men who have wealth and power, and who may ruin you and your family. If General Sparker had long to live, you would be safe under his shadow, but alas! the noble old patriarch is fast tottering to his grave. I cannot suffer you to sacrifice yourself for me. It would be selfish and contemptible."

"Mr. Stewart, replied John Standfast, with his quiet smile and look of decision and kindness, "I have thought it all over and over, turning the subject round in my mind, as I would a valve in my hand to see that the plates were smooth and the joints tight, and I have come to my conclusion. In my experience, I have always found it pay to do right, and take the consequences. General Sparker is the chief officer of our company, and his will is my law. Besides, he was my friend when I was a poor lad. To him I owe all I am in the world, and I love him as a father. I can have no greater duty or pleasure than to carry out his plans."

"Standfast and Stewart did not have to embrace, or even to shake hands. They were not demonstrative men. Each stood in his place for a moment, silent

and motionless. Without an outward expression, they felt their inmost souls pledged to each other in a perpetual bond of affection and fidelity. Nothing in the universe can be stronger than the tie which unites two natures so noble and generous.

The order for the transfer of workmen, locomotive and cars came from Walter Sparker precisely as Saul Bidman had advised, and as John Standfast and Edward Stewart expected. With its issue and enforcement, the two Vice-Presidents gloated over the ruin of their victim as an assured fact.

During the next week, while the machinery was in motion, John and Edward accomplished, unobserved, all their needed work. About midnight, a lamp began to glimmer in the Alma shops. Often it would dart mysteriously about, and occasionally be taken out under the stars to an adjoining shed. Two forms moved silently around, casting unwonted shadows. Occasionally could be heard low voices, whose whispers were accompanied by nods and looks of intelligence. Then clinked through the air the subdued noise of a hammer. Other sounds familiar in shops were so muffled as not to attract attention. Thus the work steadily grew in the light and in the darkness, and advanced to its completion. When the expected day arrived all was ready.

His enemies marveled at the acquiescence of Stewart, and supposed that, filled with alarm and despair, he had told his patron that his task was impossible, and abandoned it. Conceive their fear and rage when the

time appointed came, and showed General Sparker, with his feeble gait and venerable locks, supported along the street on the arm of Edward Stewart! This in the village was an event. All eyes and faces welcomed the grand old man as he passed through the place created by his own genius and enterprise. No European nobleman, amid his ancestral halls and estates, ever had so true and enthusiastic a greeting. It was the reward of talents and virtues such as could only have grown to their splendid maturity under the shadow of republican institutions.

As General Sparker passed their offices, his son and son-in-law were compelled, in decency, to come down and speak to him, but their faces betrayed their gloom, hatred and disappointment, while toward Edward Stewart, they darted glances full of satanic malignity.

"Doctor, are you ready?" inquired the General, with much of his old vigor and animation. "Come along, Walter," he continued, "this may be my last ride on our road, and I want you both to enjoy it with me."

The two guilty and abashed men stammered out their excuses, and the quick eye of General Sparker noticed their confusion.

"What does this mean?" he inquired. "I do not understand it."

"We did not know," said Saul Bidman, with the most perplexed embarrassment, "that you were to be out this morning."

"Not know it!" cried the General, in surprise. "And you, too, Walter! Were you ignorant?"

"Until we saw you on the street," he replied, with a painful hesitation, "we did not suppose that you would be here at all."

"Why, my son," inquired the General, "did not Mr. Stewart inform you what I directed him to do, and that I wished you to go with us."

"General," interposed Bidman, with his recovered assurance, "there is some mistake. We have not made our arrangements to witness your experiment, but we will explain all when you return. I will call this evening and make everything clear."

"Well," said the General, seeming quite bewildered, "this is most extraordinary, and I must understand fully what it means. Be sure to come as you have appointed, and make a full explanation."

Nothing escaped the eagle eye of General Sparker. Already he suspected a conspiracy. But the whistle of the locomotive was now heard, and the train was soon waiting to receive him. Taking again the arm of Edward Stewart, he walked with him to the coach, was helped by him up the platform, and sat with him on the seat before the eyes of Saul Bidman and Walter.

"Mr. Stewart," said the General, "I was sorry at first not to have my own private car, with the Eagle, to fly with us to success. However, I am now satisfied. The locomotive is, I perceive, called Experiment, and this old sleeper Victory. Both are significant names, suitable to the occasion, and I believe are omens of our triumph."

Just then, as the train started, the whistle shrieked out into what seemed a wild signal of victory. It pierced the ears and cut into the hearts of Saul and Walter, and excited in them fearful passions, whose effects we are yet to record.

The experiment was wholly successful. Both inventions proved of inestimable value in the opinions of both General Sparker and John Standfast. It was to Stewart, of course, an hour of joy and triumph—one of the brightest in his whole life, and big with momentous results he never could have anticipated. On the return, when the train stood opposite the offices of Saul Bidman and Walter Sparker, while they sat looking from their windows, the General emerged from the door of the car again, supported by Edward Stewart; and adjusting his glasses, read from a paper in his hand, in a loud, clear voice, an order he had prepared while stopping at a station:

“The first and second Vice-Presidents are hereby directed to have the two inventions of Mr. Edward Stewart, which I have just examined and tested, introduced along the trunk line and all the branches of our Railway.

ADAM SPARKER.”

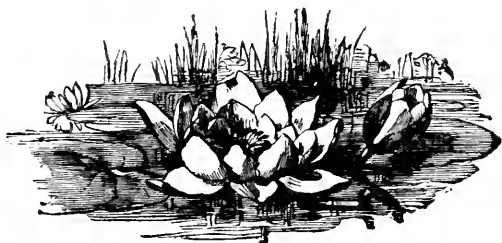
A group of workmen and villagers had again collected to greet the aged veteran, and now their acclamations burst into the air, and Edward Stewart was received with all the noisy demonstrations of a public triumph. This was the last official act of the venerable President. Its results amply justified his wonderful wisdom.

By the General's direction, Edward Stewart carried the order to Bidman and young Sparker. He delivered it with a quiet dignity, yet I will not say that there may not have been a look in his eye and a smile on his lip that faintly indicated the mighty exultation which was burning and bursting in his breast. After he left the room, the tempest came forth in cries and curses.

"Curse the upstart!" exclaimed Walter, fiercely. "He shall pay for this!"

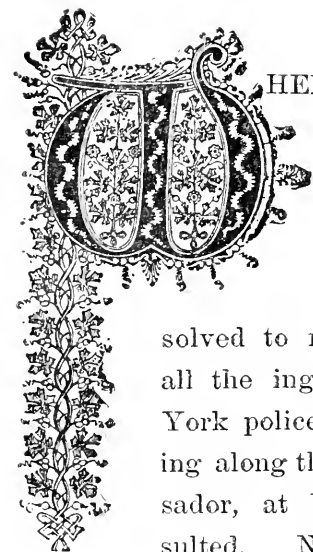
"Give me your hand to that," growled Bidman, like a hyena disturbed over his midnight bone. "I swear vengeance."

"I go your oath better a million times," cried Walter, as he tore his father's order into fragments. Some pieces he threw into the fire, some he tossed out of the window, and others ground with his heel on the floor, uttering terrible imprecations.

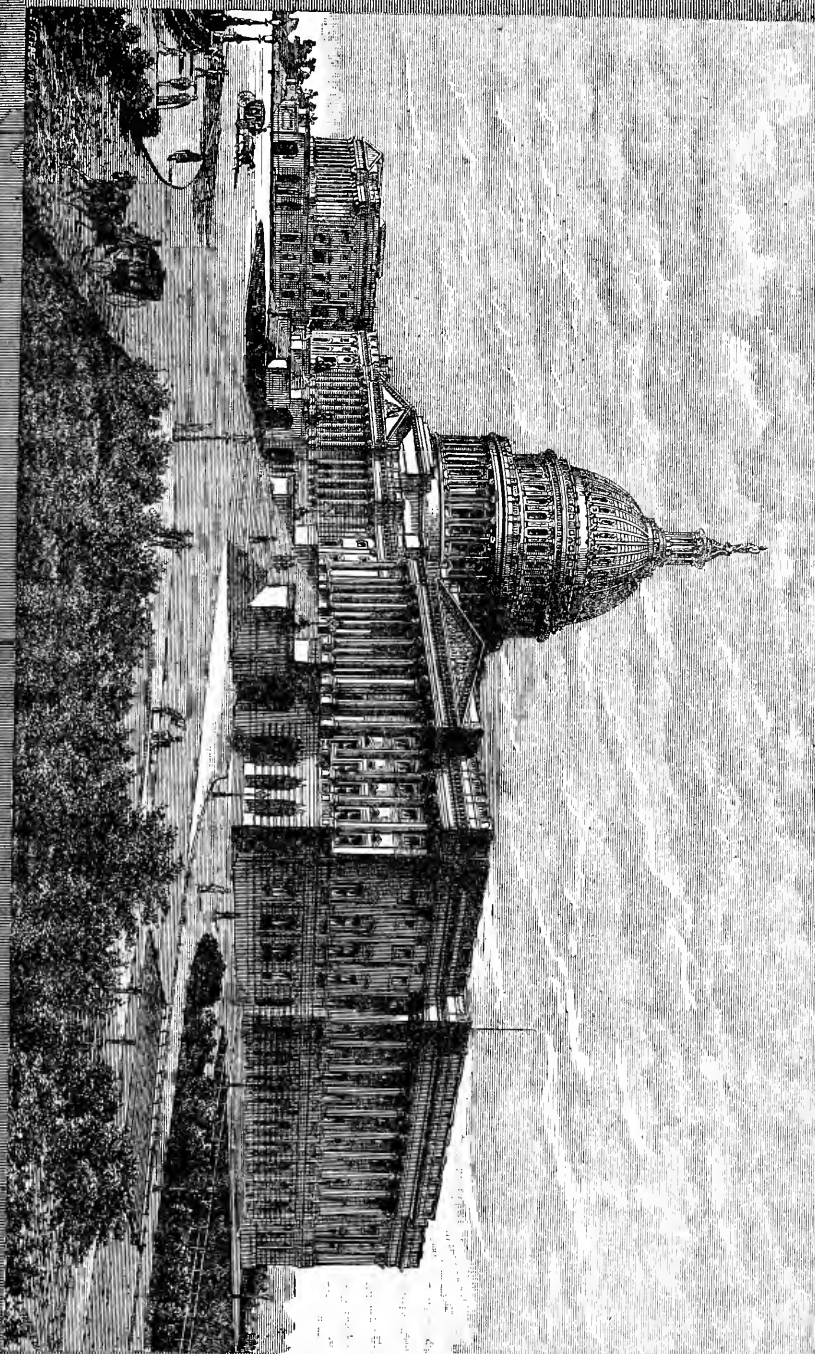


CHAPTER V.

WASHINGTON.



WHEN Nicolai left Ruric, he went at once to the stranger who wished to be called Mr. Petrovich. He was overwhelmed by the degradation of his brother, and, with whatever toil and sacrifice, resolved to rescue the girl. After exhausting all the ingenuity and energy of the New York police, it occurred to him, while passing along the street, that the Russian Ambassador, at Washington, had better be consulted. Nicolai himself had been in the country, as a priest, more than ten years, and understood perfectly the ways and spoke beautifully the language of the American people, whom he greatly loved and admired. But he thought that some official notice should be given of the important pursuit on which he was now so determined. Besides, the ambassador might make some invaluable suggestions. When Mr. Petrovich learned the refusal of Ruric and the exposure of Lillie to ruin, by the lust and vengeance of the Nihilist, he, at first, suffered the keenest agonies, which, however, subsided into a calm and



“Yon sublime dome is a national triumph.”
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deathless purpose to defeat the wretch and save the girl.

Inquiries, as we have seen, were first long and diligently made in New York, and, these proving fruitless, arrangements were completed for a difficult search which might last for years.

Nicolai, having suggested that the aid of an advertising office be secured, to such a place he and his friend repaired. In a spacious, gloomy room, they found three sides, from floor to ceiling, filled with large pigeon-holes, containing newspapers from every town and city in the land—morning dailies, evening dailies, weeklies, bi-weeklies, tri-weeklies, monthlies and bi-monthlies, flimsy magazines and ponderous reviews, blazing with tremendous advertisements in staring capitals and with flaming pictures, contrived to sell the stocks of the Fortuna Mining Company, and proving, with amazing facts, that the purchaser of its invaluable certificates must be a modern Midas with power to turn what he touched to gold, and thence into jewels, greenbacks, lands, houses, necessities, luxuries, and whatever can grace and gild life in this crowning part of our grand nineteenth century. It was supposed that the children would be sent to some distant part of the country, and that by examining these numerous newspapers, sooner or later, some hint would be obtained as a guide in tracing their movements.

When these arrangements were completed, and every inquiry possible exhausted in New York, Mr. Petrovich and Nicolai took the cars for the national capital.

Here they had already had their consultation with the Russian Ambassador, and by him had been presented to the President, the Chief-Justice, the members of the Cabinet and, indeed, to the principal personages of the city, which they had explored in all directions. Unable to obtain any information in regard to the objects of their search, and now intimately acquainted with each other, as they sauntered along the avenue toward the Capitol, they concluded to employ their leisure in an examination of that famous edifice, and compare their views of the Government and of the people.

"Washington," said Mr. Petrovich, "and especially yon Capitol, afford the truest pictures of the Americans. Let us compare, as we walk, our observations and conclusions."

"Agreed!" cried Nicolai. "We need scarcely go beyond yon Capitol itself. It is indeed a suggestive edifice. Yes, there it stands, the type of the Republic."

The two gentlemen now paused arm-in-arm before entering the grounds, and surveyed the stately edifice to obtain a deeper and fuller impression.

Mr. Petrovich, interrupting the silence, began by saying: "Now, my friend, give me first your opinion of the effect of the building as a whole."

"Since you insist," answered Nicolai, "I will express a conclusion formed after the observations of many years. Yon dome is the grandest in the world. I have seen the Mosque of St. Sophia, the Church of St. Peter's at Rome, the Duomo of Florence,

the l'Eglise des Invalides of Paris, St. Paul's in London, and in our own St. Petersburg, St. Isaac's flashing in the frost and glittering in its lofty gold—but that republican creation, with its sweep and symmetry, stands sublimest in its matchless majesty.”

“An enthusiastic preference for a Russian imperialist,” said Mr. Petrovich, smiling. “Yet, granting what you say, the dome does not grow up out of the building, but looks set upon it rather than a part of it, resembling a man with a magnificent head on an insufficient body.”

“True!” replied Nicolai; “but the same objection applies to nearly every dome and edifice I have mentioned, and seems to arise from some difficulty as yet insuperable to architecture.”

“My republicanized friend,” said Mr. Petrovich, with a yet broader smile, “your Capitol fronts the wrong way. That it may face the sun, like an Oriental temple, it turns its back on Washington, which ascends the rear stairs, and enters the rear door. The architect will be immortal who wheels the noble front round to this side, so that rising above that hill it may appear in all its majesty. These colonnades would then shine in their true beauty and magnificence. While copies, like the dome, they are yet improvements on their European originals.”

The gentlemen now mounted the steps and pursued their way to the rotunda. “This is certainly noble in its conception and in its effect,” said Nicolai. “To such grandeur you cannot deny artistic skill.”

“Yet, after all, how inferior this interior to that of the dome of St. Peter’s, St. Paul’s, or our own St. Isaac’s! See those eternally tomahawking Indians, in the act of dealing death, stiff and expressionless as their defunct victims! Nearly as bad are these gigantic painted platitudes, with their numerous arms and legs squared by rule and compass. In the adjoining room, those limbs and features in marble belong to corpses instead of men, while, in opposite extreme, at the eastern entrance, the statues are ludicrous in the excess and agony of their action. But above all,” he exclaimed, pointing with a laugh to the pictured allegories over their leads, “behold yon absurd mixture of ancient forms, robes and ideas with modern figures, costumes and conceptions! Ceres sits on a patent-reaper! Mercury stands in the midst of warehouse clerks, bales and boxes! Minerva is advising school girls, school boys, and school mistresses! Burly Vulcan, a blacksmith in the divine purple, stands by a nineteenth century anvil! Last of all and worst of all, see Washington, in an old woman’s skirt, serenely floating in a circle of flying and trumpeting nymphs! Horses, chariots, machines, trucks, warehouses, cannon, cannon-balls, mortals, immortals, supposed to be in ærial suspension, but looking as if they would tumble down on our heads! In American Art, as in American Literature, I fear, what is good is exotic and what is bad is indigenous.”

“I am sorry, Mr. Petrovich,” rejoined Nicolai, becoming excited in his tone and look, “so widely to

differ from you. To a certain extent, I admit your criticism. But yon sublime dome is a national triumph. It alone points to a glorious future in every domain of creative genius. Considering the newness of the country, and the magnitude of its material interests, both Literature and Art are bright with promise. Science, too, here is in its youth mature, while in agriculture and manufactures this republic leads the world.

"I find in this country much polished taste and much correct judgment," rejoined Mr. Petrovich. "Americans profit by their intercourse with Europe, and are quick to borrow and even improve. But in Literature and Art the very spring of genius is wanting."

"You amaze me!" said Nicolai, with a surprised and bewildered expression. "May not your imperialistic prejudices affect your opinions? In these Americans meet all the marks of physical and intellectual superiority."

"This, too, I concede," answered Mr. Petrovich amused, "and my own Russian bias also. But in this hard and sharp Republic is wanting that IDEAL which is the impulse of the imagination. Without it, genius dies. Here in pictures, statues, music, poetry, architecture, is absent that immortal aspiration which alone sublimates and glorifies. All is materialistic—narrowed to earth—keen as a bargain and correct as a contract—never a vision of the Eternal. This was the breath of Greek Art, the inspiration of mediæval cathedrals, the light

in the marbles of Angelo and over the canvas of Raphael. Not an edifice in this land represents a national conception. The temple at Jerusalem, the Parthenon of Athens, the Capitol in Rome—even the Ottoman St. Sophia—St. Peter's, St. Paul's, St. Isaac's, Notre Dame—each was erected to express the religious consciousness of a people. A Republic, by a necessary law, dethrones God and Immortality. Hence it is the tomb of creative genius."

"I confess that I am startled at your opinions," rejoined Nicolai. "May I suggest a partial answer to one of your arguments? Old *democratic* Athens was the *cradle*, not the grave of the beautiful."

"But the glory of her art," said Mr. Petrovich, sadly, "was brief as splendid. It scarcely survived the life of Pericles."

"I see," said Nicolai, "that in defence of my American friends I must turn prophet. Christianity lives in the national consciousness of this people. Its vision of the immortal will kindle the sublime and the beautiful into original forms which will give new luster to art and illuminate humanity with their splendor. The commingling nations here will mold the past of the world into the ideal of its future, and furnish the type of its last and best manhood."

The color flushed over the cheek and into the forehead of Mr. Petrovich as he said, with evident displeasure:

"Such an opinion is scarcely to be reconciled with your loyalty to Russia."

"Pardon me, your—I mean Mr. Petrovich—if I have spoken with too much enthusiasm. While I admire the young Republic, my life is yet consecrated to Russia. To me, my own dear country is more precious than all earth besides."

"Use your liberty while you have it," said Mr. Petrovich, smiling; "but be careful how you eulogize republics under the shadow of his Majesty's throne. One other remark I will venture, even if you think me cynical. As in this republic there is no religious symbol, so there is no national name. In the land of the Czar, or of the Emperor, or the Queen, a citizen says: 'I am a Russian, a German, an Englishman.' Here he may style himself a Georgian, a Virginian, a Pennsylvanian; but when he could speak of himself in his supreme political relation as a citizen of the *Republic*, he must call himself an *American*—a word to which the Canadian, Mexican and Esquimaux have the same title. To say, 'I am a citizen of the United States,' in the awkward circumlocution, dissipates the passionate love which would have been kindled for a land giving a *name* to its people."

"Yet, in no country," said Nicolai, thoughtfully, "is the national feeling more intense, or the national flag more loved. During the late war, its stars and stripes excited an overmastering enthusiasm, which was the inspiration of victory. This country, like Russia, has a continuous territory, which promotes unity, and when the British Empire, composed of scattered and distant provinces, shall be exploded to fragments, the great

monarchy of the East, and this great republic of the West, will, together, be the lights of the world, and shed over humanity its millennial glory. Now, you have the dream to which I have devoted myself."

When Nicolai had thus expressed his vision in words, he paused and seemed suddenly excited and alarmed. Glancing his eye to the opposite side of the rotunda, he said, with a painful effort for control:

"Excuse me, Mr. Petrovich! I see a man with whom I wish to speak. If you will remain on this seat I will return in a few minutes."

Crossing the rotunda rapidly, he passed into a hall, keeping still in his view his brother Ruric, whom he had seen, and now followed down the stairway into the basement of the Capitol. Concealing himself behind a pillar, he overheard the conversation of his brother with two men, whom he soon discovered to be New York Nihilists. One said, in a low whisper:

"It can't be done this morning. The House is in committee and the Speaker not in his chair."

"And the Vice-President," said the second, "has not yet returned. I can't kill a man a hundred miles away."

"Well!" said Ruric, "I'll wait no longer." Holding up his pistol in the shadow of the pillar, he continued, with the leer and look of a fiend: "The cold lead in this social adjuster weighs just two hundred grains. It must be warmed in the presidential heart this morning. I see blood, and I must have it, if I hang. Now's *my* chance; you may take yours to-morrow."

The two murderous villains walked down the hall and left the brothers on the opposite sides of the pillar. How antagonistic the characters separated by that marble! From the same womb, yet differing as Hell from Heaven! Each unconscious of the presence of the other, they stood in profound silence, one meditating the murder which the other sought to prevent. How sharp and terrible the contrasts of this mysterious human existence!

The fiendish plan rushed across the vision of Nicolai in pictures of flame. He saw that it was intended to leave no Executive for the nation, and plunge it into universal anarchy. Satan alone instigated a plot so diabolical. Nicolai found himself trembling in the presence of this frightful iniquity, but, by a strong effort, subdued his tremor, and brought his nerves under the control of his will. All his faculties of body and soul now calmly concentrated themselves into one supreme purpose. He suddenly moved round the pillar and confronted Ruric, who started and became livid with his hideous rage.

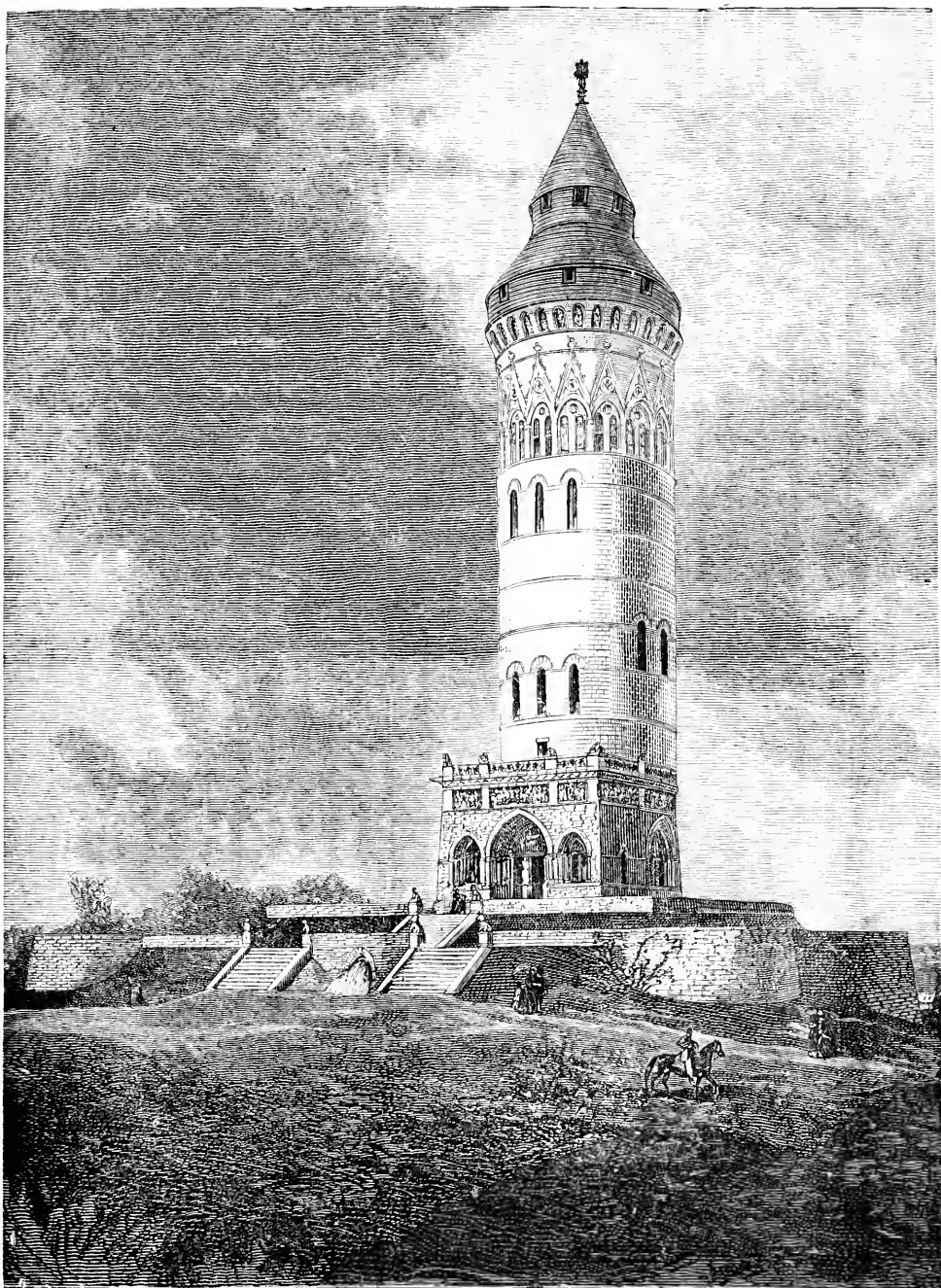
"Curse you, Nicolai!" he exclaimed, while his eye was bloodshot as a tiger's. "You have heard me. One of these balls is for you."

But he was too slow. Nicolai quickly knocked the pistol out of his hand, and threw his arms around the Nihilist. The brothers were face to face and heart to heart in mortal struggle, as if the Good and the Evil were fighting for final victory. Some supernatural power seemed to convert into steel the sinews of Nicolai.

His embrace was that of the lion or the anaconda. He felt as if his arms were crushing into the flesh and breaking the bones of his antagonist, who, relaxing his grasp, and almost palsied in his limbs, fell headlong, like a smitten bullock, to the floor. As he lay there, exhausted, with staring eyes and drooping head, Nicolai seized his pistol. He took the weapon to a vault that was near, threw it down through the gloom, and as it was cocked, it exploded by striking a beam in its descent. The smothered report went through the basement corridors, and could have been heard even in the rotunda, dreadful as the last groan of murder, while the flash illuminated the deep darkness of the loathsome abyss in which it found a suitable resting place.

When Nicolai returned, a glance through a window showed him the President on the steps of the Capitol passing to his carriage. A sight of the intended victim brought vividly before him the naked hideousness of the conspiracy, and all the horrors from which he had so strangely delivered a nation. Grateful to Heaven for the escape, and excited by the magnitude of the projected crime, he stooped over his fallen brother, who gradually regained his consciousness and his strength.

"Oh, Ruric," he exclaimed, when the Nihilist was enabled to stand, "how could you think of a thing so terrible ! The blood, the pain, the death of your victim ; the agony of the wife, the bereavement of the children, the woe of a great people—could not these move you ? Is the Nihilist dead to every feeling of humanity ? Truly, he regards neither God nor man."



"A nation in tears."
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"Who cared for me," he cried, wildly; "beggared, disgraced, crushed by a tyrant, a slave, a criminal, toiling in mines, and starving in forests, a wanderer, with a mark on my forehead, banished and execrated? The world is against me and I am against the world. Your God is against me and I am against your God. Eye for eye; blood for blood; life for life! The greater the sufferings in others, the greater the revenge for me!"

"Son of my mother, bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, nourished at the same breast, rocked by the same hand, watched by the same love," exclaimed Nicolai in tears, "Ruric, my brother, will thou be an assassin, delighting in secret murder, the enemy of mankind, the desolator of homes, the destroyer of nations! Prison, gallows, hell, surely these await thee!"

The wretch seemed touched for a moment.

"Nicolai," he cried, with a maniacal emotion, "I cannot help it! Like the tiger, I love blood. It has become my nature. Does the beast maul himself in the gore of his victim? I tell you I, too, must have blood. Everything looks red before me. You have your feelings, I have mine. Each, like this unconscious breeze, is borne onward to his destiny."

"But worse even than murder," replied Nicolai, "is the crime which is the crown and consummation of your evil plans. To steal a young girl, to watch her growth to womanhood, to wait your occasion through years that you may ruin her innocence for your lust

and your revenge—this seems to me the perfection of Satanic wickedness. Oh, begin to purge thy soul, by renouncing thy purpose, and pledging to me the surrender of the child.”

“Stop!” Ruric burst forth. “Stop! no more! You have fooled me in this, but you shall not fool me in that. I will have my reward, if it costs your life and my own. We part to meet no more. You have again shown yourself my enemy.”

“I vow to my God to defeat you,” said Nicolai, with a serene confidence.

“And I swear, at whatever cost, I will accomplish my purpose,” replied Ruric, with an expression of fiendish resolve, and then walked slowly down the hall.

When Nicolai attempted to climb the stairs, on his return to the rotunda, he had more than once to lean against the wall to prevent himself from falling. He was exhausted by the tempest through which he had passed. Mr. Petrovich, observing the pallor on his face, inquired :

“What ails you, my friend? Your cheek is colorless, and your whole body trembles.”

“Since I left you,” replied Nicolai, with deep feeling, “I have lived an age. A few minutes have marked life more ineffaceably than ordinary years.”

“Explain to me; explain immediately!” said Mr. Petrovich hastily. “I perceive in your conduct the shadow of some painful mystery.”

“I have seen Ruric since I parted from you here.”

“Ruric, and in this Capitol!”

"It is too true! I noticed him across the rotunda before leaving you, and following him, I saw him meet two men behind a column. On approaching, I heard their whispers, concealed by the base, and ascertained that they had agreed this morning, in this edifice, to kill the President, Vice-President, and Speaker of the House, and thus, plunge the country into anarchy. Fortunately, the latter two were absent, and the other men, evidently New York Nihilists, had to abandon their part of the scheme. Ruric, however, was bent on blood, insisting that he would shoot the President. When his accomplices withdrew I confronted him, and grasped him in my arms, which seemed converted into steel. He trembled in my embrace, relaxed, and fell to the floor, when I took away his pistol and flung it into a vault. Soon after, to my relief, I saw the President leave the Capitol and enter his carriage."

"This is indeed marvelous," exclaimed Mr. Petrovich, excitedly. "Such an escape deserves a *Te Deum*. You have saved a Chief Magistrate from death, a family from unutterable woe, a country from anarchy, your own name from infamy, and Russia from a cloud which would have blackened over her through all history."

"Nihilism is a poison diffused through the social atmosphere of the world. What a disgrace to my family! What a stain on my country! What a blot on my race!" exclaimed Nicolai, passionately. "Men, drifted from Christianity, with no faith in a God or a

hereafter; maddened to despair by the inevitable and inexplicable sufferings of humanity, become the prey of their passions, and are ready for any dark work of Satan. What wonder if such waifs of the universe are the sport of its tempests and its billows, and, more than all, of the malice of its lost spirits!"

"There you speak like a priest," said Mr. Petrovich, laughing. "But I, you know, speak like a statesman and a philosopher. Our universities are responsible for this modern madness for blood. If they are seats of learning, they are often also the sources of moral death. Folly is never more pleased than when she sees her cap and bells on these solemn old owls called professors. Hegel is the father of Nihilism. Its fountain is the German University Pantheism. Carlyle, snarling out from his gloom that 'might is right,' at once justified the tyrant and his assassin; and now, in one of the oldest universities in this republic, on a commencement occasion, before its assembled youth and famous scholars and divines, hear these words of a most distinguished orator, and hereafter blame the murderer less than his defender and instigator."

Having uttered these thoughts with a most burning earnestness, Mr. Petrovich unfolded the New York morning paper, and read as follows:

"Nihilism is the righteous and honorably resistance of a people crushed under an iron rule. Nihilism is evidence of life. When 'order reigns in Warsaw' it is spiritual death. Nihilism is the last weapon of victims choked and manacled beyond all other resist-

ance. It is crushed humanity's only means of making the oppressor tremble. God means that unjust power shall be insecure, and every move of the giant prostrate in chains, whether it be to lift a single dagger, or stir a city's revolt, is a lesson in justice. One might well tremble for the future of the race if such a despotism did exist without provoking the bloodiest resistance. I honor Nihilism. Of all the cants that are canted in this canting world, the cant of Americans bewailing Russian Nihilism is the most disgusting."

Nothing can exceed the detestation, the horror, the amazement, depicted on Nicolai's face as he exclaimed:

"Mr. Petrovich, you have astounded me. I confess that I have had strong tendencies to republicanism, and that I have admired the people of this country, believing that here, at least, Nihilism could only flourish amid professed robbers and murderers, who had no interest in society but its plunder. The experiences of this morning have excited my alarm, and I can now have some sympathy with the repressive measures of our Emperor."

"I am glad to hear this," replied Mr. Petrovich, with evident pleasure; "and more especially as I have resolved to take you home with me. Your democratic preferences in Russia would have made you trouble and impaired your influence."

The gentlemen now ascended the long and laborious stairway, and soon stood on the balcony which circles the dome. Below them the city, with its wide avenues and superb public buildings, the broad Potomac

flashing in the sun, the distant hills rising gradually into the blue sky, together forming a magnificent panorama, excited bursts of enthusiasm.

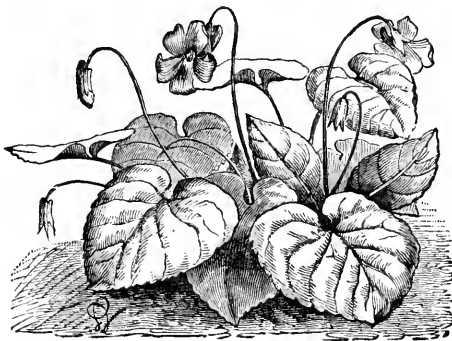
Pointing upwards, Mr. Petrovich cried, "See yon image of liberty, exalted over the dome of the Capitol! It will not propitiate Nihilism. Our Russian fanatics despise what they style American conservatism. Wretches will urge themselves forward to a desperation which will imperil Presidents as well as Emperors. About the Executive mansion may yet be seen the flash of the bayonet and the plume of the officer, as hired guards watching to defend the life of the Chief of the Republic. Should that day arrive, a crown may become a necessity. To escape the rule of the mob and the perils of frequent elections, hereditary monarchy may be a refuge of this boastful Democracy, and England the model of America."

"Never, in my opinion," firmly rejoined Nicolai. "Monarchy in this country is an impossibility. Nay, the whole tendency of the world, in our age, seems to be in favor of republican institutions. I do not speak of what I approve, but of what is obvious and inevitable."

This remark terminated the conversation. The gentlemen, descending the stairs, left the Capitol, walked silently down the Avenue, entered their hotel, and retired to their apartments.

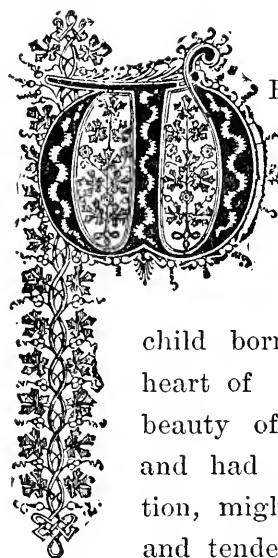
That night on his bed, in the darkness, Nicolai had a fearful vision. His mind seemed flaming with light. In the mystic illumination, things stood before him as

living forms. Fancies glowed into realities. He imagined he heard the report of Ruric's pistol. In a vision, he saw the President fall, pierced by a bullet. Vividly before him, were the prostrate form, the pallid face, the ghastly wound. Men appearing, rushing to arrest the murderer. He saw an agonized wife, weeping children, a nation in tears, a world filled with alarm, sorrow and amazement. Over the land and on the sea, were sobs and tears and anguish, save where the Nihilists celebrated their hellish triumphs over successful assassinations. Now appeared the chamber of death, the solemn funeral pageant, the republic in mourning, the black drapery of woe beneath lowered flags as a badge of universal sorrow. Beyond, a cell, a trial, a conviction, a sentence, an execution—his brother swung from the gallows, amid the execrations of nations. As the weird picture passed before him, his heart swelled with grateful joy that, by the interposition of his own hand, the vision was not a reality, but only a sketch of his excited imagination.



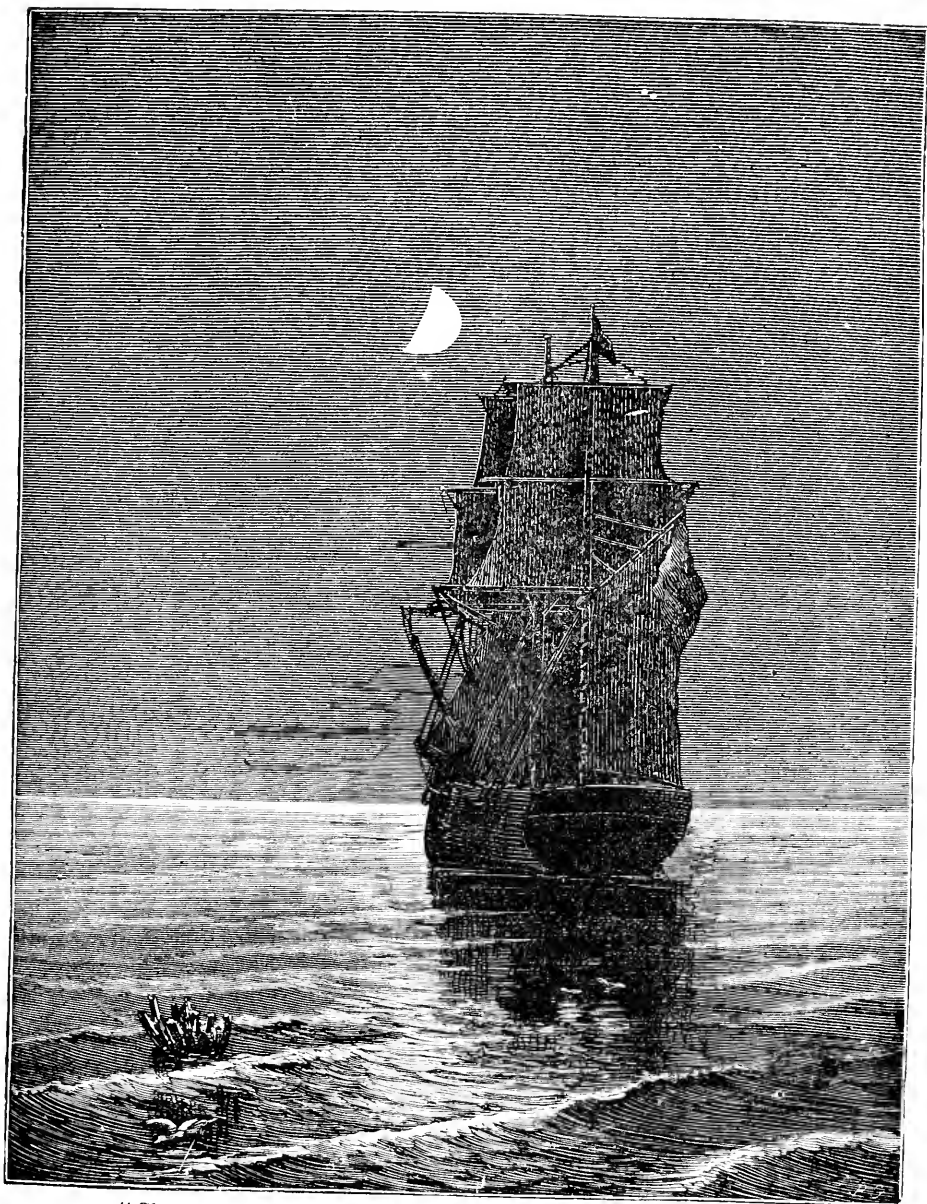
CHAPTER VI.

ON THE OCEAN.



WHEN Ruric had first reached New York, although infuriated by the memory of his wrongs, he was not yet wholly degraded. While his money lasted he had lived decently, and treated kindly the child borne away in revenge to pierce the heart of her father—his enemy. The sweet beauty of little Lillie touched the Nihilist, and had not poverty driven him to desperation, might have preserved his heart fresh and tender. But soon lank hunger, staring, pinched him and the child, and he sent out the pretty creature, with her blue eye and sad smile, to beg on the streets. This was a step toward her degradation and his own. Near him was an old Italian iniquity, who trafficked in human flesh, buying and selling boys and girls, waifs of misery drifted to our shores by currents of sorrow from all lands, to be purchased and disciplined by savage masters as itinerant beggars, jugglers and musicians. Such fate for children is the darkest mystery of our inscrutable human existence.

Encouraged by the success of Lillie, from the stock



"She stands out under full canvas down the bay to the ocean."
Page 389.

of the Italian, Ruric had added Tippoo, and, soon after, Tojo to his household—the latter, being much older, as a species of assistant. The education of these children was not wholly neglected. Ruric, on Sundays, instructed them for his amusement and to perfect himself in English, and also because he argued that their quickened intelligence would increase his gains. Partly from policy, and partly from a savagery ever growing fiercer with his social and moral debasement, he treated the children with habitual cruelty, often inflicting terrible blows, permitting them no food during the day's long toil, and keeping them in servile terror by a deliberate system of espionage and subjugation. Associating with the degraded, amid the slums of a vast city, with innumerable temptations to deceit, the two younger children strangely preserved their purity, and were, under the circumstances, wonderfully kind, honest and truthful. This, however, was partly due to the influence of an old missionary, Mr. Archer, who, during years, watched and instructed them, as he happened to meet them on the streets, with a most paternal Christian interest and fidelity. But drudging wearily through the week, confined on Sundays, half-fed, scolded, beaten, youthful joyousness fled from the little slaves, existence became a dull burden, and their minds benumbed and insensible to almost everything in nature. Lillie had an exquisite voice as well as beauty, and Tippoo, besides an engaging exterior, possessed a genius for jugglery, inherited from his Indian ancestors. Tojo was a sharp Japanese rascal who loved to live by his

wits, and play "kid" to thieves and robbers, whose society he preferred.

Confiding in the thoroughness of the subjection of Lillie and Tippoo, and the keen superintendence of Tojo, Ruric, partly to relieve himself of their presence, and also as a means of eluding the expected pursuit, had decided to send the children, with harp, guitar and their other equipments, to distant portions of the country. Passage was secured in the brigantine *Mermaid*, to carry them around by the ocean and up the Chesapeake to Annapolis, the vessel intending to return with a cargo of Severn sand from near Round Bay, a few miles above the quaint capital of Maryland, where Tojo was to meet them by rail, and direct their future movements according to circumstances.

On an evening in early June, see them, with their instruments, and their rough box, and their library—a small Bible and a book of "Songs of all Nations," purchased by their meagre savings at an antiquated book-stand. Tojo has taken leave with dreadful threats and curses should they retain any money beyond their necessary wants, or use their liberty to escape. He yet stands on the wharf, with his hands in his pockets in American style, occasionally shaking a fist and muttering a farewell oath.

The hawser is loosed. A dwarf of a tug begins to puff, pant and worry the water, and then march down East River, amid the shipping, drawing the vessel with the pride of a very small boy doing a very big thing, or of a Bantum rooster strutting before a great Shanghai

hen. At first the children are stupefied. They can not believe it. Not once, within memory, have they been without the limits of the crowded city. From infancy, they have been every day under the eye and lash of Ruric. Can he permit this? Why has he allowed it? Are they indeed free? Rather, are they themselves? Is it a dream? No! it is all real. There is Tojo just visible in the distance, there is the advancing tug, there is the receding city, there they are themselves—Lillie and Tippoo, with harp, box and guitar, and there can be no longer a mistake. See the Mermaid parts from her escort; her sails are flung to the evening breeze! She stands out under full canvas down the bay to the ocean! Lillie sits by her harp, and Tippoo by his guitar in bewildered silence, which the latter interrupts with an amazement no longer controllable, bursting out with the question:

“Thunder, Lil! do you mind the bird last week that flew’d out of a window, where we were singin’ and playin’ near the park?”

“Yes, Tip, I do. A boy and a man in livery followed it. It behaved queer at first as if it didn’t know what was the matter, and would hop away, and then they’d chase it, till at last it know’d it was free, and flew’d up on a tree, and began to sing a jolly song.”

“Well, Lil, I tell you; you and me’s like that bird when it jist got out of its cage. I feel as if I didn’t know about it no way. But my wings will be movin’

easy afore long, and my throat tuned up pretty well too."

"But," she replied, in the utmost terror, "don't try to fly away. Ruric has his string to us after all, and I tell you he can pull us back, and take our heads and arms off, too, if he chooses."

"You bet I know that," said Tip, with a boyish swagger, thrusting his hands in his pockets, as if a native American, and looking wise. "Old thunder and lightnin' won't forget his babies. Telegraph wires and railway tracks are better nor strings to keep us in his hand, and I don't love his leather lash enough to go back to it, and give it another coat of red to improve its looks. But let Ruric go to Jersey and live on mosquitoes! Our captain here's another sort. Look at his mouth and eye! He's jolly and his wife's jollier yet, and these sailors are jolly, and I'll bet we'll have a jolly time on a jolly ship."

"All right, Tip," said Lillie, softly. "I'll do all I can to help the fun if you'll only promise not to run away. Ruric would kill us. It makes me shake when I think of him. He has struck me, and made my blood run a thousand times. I fear his horrid face and voice more than his lash, and his eye seems lookin' through me all the time."

"Well, Lil," replied Tip, with a gay smile and whistle, "that's all over now. Hurrah for ourselves! No telegraphs over these big waves, nor railroads either! We are safe till we meet Toj at Annapolis, and now for one good time. This old Captain and his

big wife will give us a chance, if you'll let me manage. So begin! Everything in a first appearance. Programme—Mock-Bird, from 'Songs of All Nations,' accompanied by Lil on the harp and Tip on the guitar. That book's a good investment—they six cents 'll make us friends wherever we go, land or sea. So strike up while the breeze's good!"

The children tuned softly their instruments and then sang together the following song from their companionable volume:

My little Mock-Bird, why so gay,
Merrily singing on yon spray?
I love to hear thy tuneful throat,
Wild warble joy in each clear note.

Oh, gay am I, because my wing
No more on bars I madly fling;
See, I can mount the morning air,
And thrill out freedom's music there.

But, little Mock-Bird, who will give
The grains and drops that make thee live?
The hawk, I fear, from yon clear sky,
His talon in thy blood will dye.

I sip the nectar of the dew;
I pick the seed where first it grew,
And Heaven, that makes the world my home,
Forgets me not where'er I roam.

The breeze was brisk but light, the sails were full, and all on board could listen in silent admiration. Lillie was born with the genius of song, and each tone

of her musical voice was mellowed by suffering. Notwithstanding her vocation, her beauty always excited attention, and there lingered about her a charm of mystery. A tear was on Captain Jack's rough cheek. Even Commodore Beck, as the sailors called his wife, felt her thick lips quiver, and old black Tom Tar, Ned Soft, Dan Heave and Bill Jump, and all the rest of the crew, while the song lasted, never moved a quid in their mouths. Mr. Rylance, the only passenger, a young graduate of Yale, taking a sea-voyage for his health, was amused and astonished. A magic sympathy warmed all hearts toward the little wanderers.

The sun had sunk behind the Orange Mountains, but the gold and purple of the clouds lingered, and left their mingling glories on the islands, and kindled with their light the waters of the bay, while before them the moon rose out of the sea in the beauty of her summer brightness, and the evening star glittered with a yet more beaming splendor. Such a spectacle had never before been observed by the young travelers. Indeed their slavery since childhood had sealed by suffering the vision of nature from those two wronged souls. A new world was suddenly born in their breasts, tinged with those hues of religion inseparable from human nature. They were profoundly impressed, and indeed awed into silence.

"Thunder!" at last Tip burst out. "Lil, isn't this Paradise? It must be, since it don't look like anything I ever saw before."

"It is! it is!" exclaimed the girl, in a whisper of

admiration. "This is what our old street missionary told us about. There's an angel! Look, Tip! I see him on that cloud!"

"And I see another," said Tip, "at the end of the cloud. He has a harp, by thunder!"

"I see some dancing," cried Lil. "There they are, one, two, three!"

"And some on the top are flying out," Tip exclaimed, pointing with his finger, while his eye kindled and his face beamed.

Thus the imaginations of the children peopled the clouds with shapes of beauty so different from the loathsome and distorted forms of want and sickness they had daily seen through so many years of their cramped and wretched lives. It was marvelous how the teaching of Ruric and Tojo, the casual instructions of old Mr. Archer, the study of their pocket Bible, and book of songs, had given them the use of words, purified their taste, and preserved them from the slang of slums. Some superior blood, and ages of ancestral refinement have surely helped to produce such a result.

Commodore Beck now came forward and expressed in words and deeds the kind feelings of her large, womanly heart.

"Wall! I guess you be ready for your evenin' grub. I hearn your talkin' and 'twas queer for such as you be. But you can't live on clouds and angels at sea, nor land either for matter of that. I've brought your grub on deck, and I s'pose your used to takin' where you can get it."

"Thanks," said Tip, politely; "thanks! We are very hungry, and it will be jolly to eat it here."

"Thanks," added Lillie, "many thanks! We are so glad to get it. Many times we eat on a step, or a curb-stone, or wherever the people are kind to us, and sometimes walking along the street."

The Commodore then gave the children some hard crackers, and two large slices of cold ham, which, followed by a cup of water from the barrel, constituted a comfortable supper, after which they rested their heads on their instruments, and composed themselves for the slumbers of the night. Stars watched over them, glittering in the sky and mirrored in the sea, while the moon smiled down from the heavens in her queenly majesty.

Hark! the scraping of a fiddle! the hum of merry voices! the beating of heavy feet on the deck! Captain Jack and his ponderous spouse are whirling and sweating in the dance, while Tom Tar draws his black hand vigorously over the strings of his violin, and all the other sailors unite in the strange frolic, and in a way which would shatter the discipline of any other ship. But Captain Jack has his own theories. We will see what they are hereafter, and how they succeed. No vessel ever floated on a wave was managed like our Mermaid.

After the sound sleep produced by health and weariness, Lillie first awoke. Around her was the illimitable circle of the sea, touched by the circle of the sky swelling sublimely into its vast ethereal dome. The

luminaries of heaven have now changed their places. The sun is lifting his face above the ocean in the east, and the moon opposite is just visible over the western waves; no cloud stains the blue sky, except one dark, rising mass, circled over by a magnificent bow whose painted glories dye the deep on which they stand like celestial pillars. Lillie was entranced. She was speechless. At last, her amazement was expressed in ejaculations.

"What is it?" she whispered to herself. "What can it be? I never saw or heard of it before. Who made it? Tip, Tip, get up! See there!"

She shook the boy energetically, who rolled his eyes and muttered his displeasure.

"What do you knock a fellow up in this way for?" he growled. "I was having a jolly dream and you spoiled it. Just let a fellow be."

"But, look round, Tip," replied the girl, with a species of rapture, while her eye and face seemed beaming with the new light in her soul. "Look, and tell me quick what it is! I must know."

"Thunder!" said the boy, amazed as he gazed. "I never saw it before, any more than you. It's pretty as a picture. How round and bright it is, and higher nor Trinity spire, and wider nor North River."

"Oh, Tip, *this* must be Paradise. See the ocean! Beautiful colors are flying over everywhere! I never felt so before. Oh, I wish I knew what that glorious thing is."

Mr. Rylance had been taking his morning constitu-

tional on the deck, and had overheard this strange conversation. Approaching the children, he said to them:

"I can tell you what you wish to know."

"Thanks, thanks, sir," they eagerly replied together.

"But have you never really seen that before?" he inquired. "It seems incredible."

"We have not, sir," replied Tip. "We would not sham with you for the world."

"I think something has taken place in me," said Lillie, "I feel so changed. Everything looks so beautiful."

Mr. Rylance, more interested than ever, determined to employ every opportunity to instruct these apt, but neglected children.

"That is the rainbow," said he, kindly, "and is formed on that cloud by the sun shining on the drops of rain."

"Oh, sir," replied Lillie, clapping her hands, "that explains my little song." Then taking out her treasured volume from her pocket, she added, "I thought a bow was what I had seen on Broadway in the archery shops, and I could not tell how *it* could be on a cloud and over a billow."

"And, sir," said Tip, laughing, "a bow's one of them dandy fellows on Broadway, and I'd like to see him up there where the song says. He wouldn't stay long, I'm sure."

"Now, sir," continued Lillie, with increasing animation, "I understand, by looking at the ocean, every-

thing in the song, and it all seems plain and beautiful."

"Let me see your book," said Mr. Rylance, more and more pleased with the children. He took the volume from Lillie's hand, and, glancing his eye over the song, added: "Yes, you are right. Since you left New York, you have seen everything mentioned here, and can now understand it better than ever. But now, let me hear the song. You have excited my curiosity, and I want it in your best style."

The children complied with alacrity. Having tuned their instruments, Lillie sang with a low, sweet, rich plaintive voice, that touched all hearts. The roughest sailors listened with visible pleasure, showing that hard and uncultured natures will respond to the most refined sentiments when expressed in simple musical words.

My Mary, cold and bright yon moon
Shines o'er the fitful sea,
And glitters on this harp I tune,
To sing alone of thee.

And as yon wave, whose breaking crest
Flies sparkling o'er the deep;
Mary, thus fickle in thy breast
The love o'er which I weep.

Delusive on yon cloud a bow
Wild billows hangs above;
But when its glories brightest glow,
Pales, Mary, like thy love.

Nor moon whose beam is on the sea,
Nor painted bow, nor wave,
So fair and false as thou to me,
Whose smile mocks when I rave.

After the song, Tippoo said to Mr. Rylance, who stood near listening.

"Sir, it is so strange to be in the middle of a circle on the ocean."

"And this big dome over us is stranger yet," added Lillie, pointing and looking upward. "Everything is so queer at sea."

"And what is the sun, Mr. Rylance, and the moon, and the stars?" inquired Tippoo. "I never thought of them much on land. But here they look different, and I want to know."

Mr. Rylance, after a little reflection, answered:

"Wait a moment, and I will explain so that you will never forget it."

He disappeared below, and soon emerged with his hands and arms full of lemons and oranges of various sizes. With these and the aid of a few sticks he extemporized a planetarium, and made visible the revolutions of the earth and the planets round the sun, of the moons about the planets, and the planets on their axes; and showed how eclipses were produced, and day and night, and the seasons. He also explained the reasons of the circle of the horizon, and the rotundity of the heavens. Before the voyage ended, these children could answer questions in such a way as to show they comprehended the subject perfectly.

After the morning lesson had been completed Tippoo said :

“Now, sir, let me show my teacher something he never saw.”

He took a pack of cards, and amazed Mr. Rylance and the sailors by his marvelous dexterity in countless tricks.

When he had concluded his exhibition, Tip said, with a laugh :

“Lillie’s song was rather grave; let me sing you a funny one.”

Without his instrument, he then sang, and with such gesture and expression as to convulse his audience, another selection from his unfailing book.

The owl, the owl, is the bird for me :

I love his note from the midnight tree,

Where he winks,

And he blinks,

And he blinks,

And he winks,

And looks so wise

From his two big eyes.

The owl, the owl, he loves not the sun;

But, prudent, waits till the heat is done,

When he winks,

And he blinks,

And he blinks,

And he winks,

And he looks so wise

From his two big eyes.

The owl, the owl, when the morning breaks,
Ah! Wise from the light his way he takes.
As he winks,
And he blinks.
And he blinks,
And he winks,
And he looks so wise
From his two big eyes.

The applause was prodigious. Clapping, stamping, laughter, rewarded the performer's musical and dramatic genius.

"Now, Lillie," said Mr. Rylance, "we have had the owl. I see in your book a song to the lark, quite a different bird, and I have a notion that the lark will beat the owl any day."

"A song, a song!" echoed from every direction.

Lillie then sat down to her harp, and complied with the request of her audience in the following words, which she sang with a most exquisite pathos and expression :

See, the lark has left his nest!
'Twas a sunbeam broke his rest,
Touch'd him with immortal light,
Wing'd him from our human sight!
He has spurn'd these mists of earth,
Claiming his celestial birth.
Lo, he fades now from our view,
Mingling with his heav'n's own blue!
But, unseen, we hear him sing
Like some bright cherubic thing.

Yes! The higher he will soar,
Louder will his music pour,
Since alone his native light
Tunes his soul of flame aright.
Hark! His last best note he tries
Hid sublimest in his skies,
Proving, as he drops below,
Heav'n on earth would lose its glow

The storm of approval was more enthusiastic than ever, and kindled into encouragement Lillie, who, overmastered by the pride of her vocation, suddenly left her harp, ran up the ropes with a grace and agility which astonished the spectators, climbed the mainmast, and on one foot stood balanced on the very top, swaying with the motion of the ship. Even Captain Jack gazed up at her aghast. The sailors were speechless.

There she stood between sea and sky, high in the air, outlined in the blue of heaven, with a grace and beauty which betokened some creature of a celestial origin.

While Lillie was descending, Captain Jack, rolling his quid with an expression of marine wisdom, said to Mr. Rylance :

“Rum children, them! They'd beat us Yankees out of clocks and nutmegs, and make our boys and gals down in the feathers like chickens in a December rain.”

“They are, indeed, remarkable,” answered Mr. Rylance. “They learn with wonderful ease and rapidity. I don't think we have seen all that is in

them yet. Before our voyage ends we will know more."

"New Yorkers *is* bright," said Captain Jack. "They beats the world. A New Yorker 'll set his sails, and run round another man before he's unclewed. Breakers or no breakers, and barometer showin' a hurricane, he'll have every rag out, and take his chances."

"But these children are not natives," answered Rylance. "The girl is from a northern and the boy from a southern climate. They have had some education, and their life on the streets has wonderfully sharpened their wits. There is a mystery in them I cannot yet explain."

"Furreners in New York," said the Captain, with a knowing eye and quid, "become sharp as native-born. All sharper nor honest. Fact is, people from all nations rubbin' agin one another make blades bright and edges keen."

Here a look of anxiety began to gather over Captain Jack's face, and pointing to the south-west he said:

"Yon cloud's a weather-breeder. See! that barometer's goin' down like a sailor's grog!"

"It looks like a squall," answered Mr. Rylance. "I felt a little afraid last night."

"Yes, once," said the Captain, "we had a thumpin' sea, calm as it is now. I 'spose your heart went like a loose barrel in a ship's hold."

"No, no Captain," replied Mr. Rylance, smiling, "I was born too near the sea for that. It was your dancing disturbed me. I was afraid you might relax

discipline by indulging with your men in such sports."

"Oh, that's all!" replied the good-natured Captain. "Never fear! When this blow's over I'll explain my theories on that subject, but just now the Mermaid needs me."

He now took his trumpet, stationed Tom Tar at the wheel, and ordered all hands aloft to take in sail. Soon the vessel with her almost naked masts and arms was ready for the tempest. Nor was she one moment too soon.

The cloud, mass on mass, rolled up its blackness to the zenith. In the far distance growled the deep thunder, and the sheet lightnings flashed vividly around the horizon. There was a boding stillness in the air, more ominous because the ocean began to be agitated although not a breath was stirring. Hark! a shriek like a demon's yell! A peal shakes the heavens. The skies are on fire with blinding flashes. Now the loosed tempest rages with a demon's fury, and the mountain billows toss the ship as if sporting with her puny distress. Amid this battle of the elements, Tippoo and Lillie stand together, gazing with estatic joy as sea, sky and air lash themselves into madness. The little wanderers seem born for the billow and the tempest.



CHAPTER VII.

BELLE STANDFAST.



IDMAN had predicted that in three months Edward Stewart would be out of his place. He was a shrewd man and expected to see that his prophecies would be fulfilled, but in this instance he proved to be mistaken. Only a mean and evil nature, helped by wealth and the influence and position it gives, could have ever contrived the tricks, insults and annoyances to which he exposed the man he had resolved to ruin. But Stewart seemed to root himself more securely by means of the very violence of the malignant opposition. Bidman and Walter Sparker were baffled, they could not tell how, and hence the more terribly enraged. As they sat together, looking out of the window of their Alma office, the former said:

“You and Stewart seem running a tilt for Belle Standfast. Who’s ahead?”

“Curse the fellow!” cried Walter, scowling. “I hate him more and more. He crosses me everywhere. When he’s not with Belle he’s with father; and he’s

like a snake in my path that will bite if I don't scotch him. He has just invented an electrical engine for the old man, who pets and nurses the thing like a child. He dotes on Stewart, and they are conferring and confabulating every day, and trying their experiments. I am driven from the table and almost from my home by this upstart's infernal impudence."

"I tell you, it looks bad," growled Bidman, pulling his hat over his brow and puffing more vigorously at his cigar. Then, after a moment's silence, bringing his hands violently together, he exclaimed: "By Heaven, it's got to stop! There's something in the fellow I can't understand. He's like a leaded pith-ball—tumble him over, and he's on his feet again before you can snap your fingers. He and Standfast are thicker than ever."

"Yes," replied Walter, with a darker frown; "I owe John a grudge for the help he gave this interloper with those cursed inventions which so won father's heart. I begin to hate the one as bad as the other."

"But you are after his daughter," said Bidman. "I can't understand it."

"Ah!" answered Walter, with an air of mystery. "Saul, you're not so blind as you pretend. But there is something in it you don't see. The mother's on my side, but John's dead against me."

"Surely," exclaimed Bidman, with astonishment, "you're not mad enough to marry the girl. You would disgrace our family. Belle Standfast, daughter

of a mechanic, the wife of Walter Sparker! It wouldn't hurt us in Alma, but it would destroy us in Newport and Saratoga. We should have to sell our cottages in those places and move out of society."

"What do you mean, Bidman?" said Walter, with a sneer. "My family fountain is in a blacksmith's shop, and yours in a root-doctor's office. Let us wait a few generations before we talk of contaminating our blood and staining our respectability. I stand on my railroad stock and nothing else. There's no sham *there*. But you needn't fear; I have no thought of marrying."

"Well, Walter," replied Bidman, "you're venturing pretty near. All the village is talking about it. The women gossip at home, and the men in the shops are betting which will win—Edward Stewart or Walter Sparker."

"To the dogs with the village, Saul! Don't you see, in this pretty little picture of a girl, I can tease Standfast and Stewart at the same time. I am only sticking a few pins into them, as a boy into his bench-fellows at school, to see them squirm, and perhaps scream a little."

"It's dangerous game, I tell you," said Bidman, "and may make you more trouble than you're calculating. But that's your business, not mine."

"And I'm in a dangerous mood, brother Bidman," exclaimed Walter, passionately. "These two men have driven me nearly crazy; and while I mean no harm to the girl, I feel we are both within the circles

of a whirlpool, and may go down together. Sometimes I fear that you are the very man who makes me a cursed rascal; and yet I drive on with a hot heart and a wild eye. But I'm going to cut the bridge behind me, and leap right down into the dark chasm. Will you take my railway stocks and give me Government securities in exchange? I don't want any man to know my affairs by looking at our books, and this trade will set me free."

"You're a lunatic, Walter," said Bidman, with surprised delight. "Your father would be distracted, should he hear of this transaction, and never forgive me. But if you decide to do it, and take the responsibility, it's a bargain."

"Yes! he'd say I am crazy, and going to the devil. But it's my fancy. I want to be free, and feel the world is before me, so that I can go where I please, quick as a telegraph click. Hand me over your certificates and I will give you mine."

Of all things this was what Bidman wanted. He expected that it would require years to ripen the fruit, and lo, it is suddenly matured in the torrid heats of Walter Sparker's passions, and dropping unsolicited into his mouth. The absence of the young man from the country, he foresaw, at a glance, would soon follow from his wild and desperate mental state, and that, with his stocks in possession and the proxies of his father, he would at once be the virtual, and soon the actual, president of the road. This was the dream of his life, the prize of his ambition, the cen-

ter toward which had tended the plans and villainies of years. The exchange was speedily made.

"Now," began Walter, recklessly, while placing the certificates in his large pocket-book, "these are my charters of freedom. Neither you nor the old man can know what I spend. Curse consequences! My office to the owls! I'm my own master! The world is before me, and with the interest of half a million paid quarterly by Uncle Sam, I can have what I want in any country I may honor with my innocent presence. No danger of a poor-house, although I may bring up in a lunatic asylum. I'll do as I please—snatch the present hour and let the rest go to the devil, and I with it, if I choose."

As he concluded these words, he looked out of the window and saw Edward Stewart escorting Belle Standfast along the street, and, pointing to them, exclaimed:

"There, Saul Bidman, look there! If you want to build on my ruin, now's a chance! That's the first temptation the devil addresses to my new liberty. Yon fellow's the spark that always sets me on fire. I'll spoil that game before his Yankee legs can carry him two more blocks."

While Walter Sparker is getting his hat, cane and gloves, we will recount what had occurred between Belle Standfast and Edward Stewart but a few minutes before. But as she trips by his side along the street let me describe the girl.

She was a petite creature—an airy, pretty thing—in her way perfect—a brilliant toy, an animated doll—

graceful as a bird, and as full of nerve and flame—her bloom rich and delicate as the morning—her shape exquisite in its symmetry, and all her motions charming—her features regular, except a slight plebeian upturning of the nose—her eyes varying in color, according to the feelings they expressed—her taste in dress corresponding to her form—bright, fitful, sparkling, with smiles and tears equally at her command. She could kiss John Standfast and persuade Mary Standfast into anything. If they had not for her niche and shrine and altar, she was no less the divinity of their home. The defect of her character was, that in Belle Standfast taste was a substitute for conscience. She had her mother's French mercury, with the freedom of our American quicksilver, instead of the delicate restraints of the land of her maternal ancestors. Her mother and father were both uneducated, and this excited in her a sense of superiority, and in them a consciousness of inferiority, because Belle had enjoyed all the advantages of a modern school. She thus grew up without that *subjection* to authority which lies at the root of both principle and refinement and of all family felicity, and without which men and women are drifted hither and thither on the changeful currents of this stormy human existence.

Belle Standfast, with all her faults, was fascinating, and Edward Stewart, so differently born and educated, had been now three months under her spell. That such a grave, sensible, and superior man should be

dominated by such a mercurial piece of pretty female flesh is a phenomenon in our nature impossible to explain. One glance at his splendid, aristocratic mother, and her family history and educational principles, would have increased the difficulty of the problem. Yet, the fact remained. Stewart had been for months madly in love with the daughter, and was the intimate and confidential friend of the father. She mingled with all his thoughts, colored all his plans, and was the beautiful center of his life. For him she had an instinctive, profound, sisterly respect.

That very morning, Edward had resolved to settle the question of his heart. He could wait no longer. Walter Sparker, during the same period, had been equally devoted, and it seemed as yet impossible to decide which the girl preferred. Possibly, she scarcely knew herself. Just before leaving her house, the following conversation occurred, which was conclusive of the whole subject.

As they were seated together in the parlor, after a long, gay, discursive conversation, Edward, pausing, suddenly said :

“Miss Standfast, can you be serious for a single moment ?”

“Mr. Stewart,” she replied, with an arch, dimpling smile, “can you be jolly for a single moment ? I’ll make a bargain, and we’ll exchange natures, and thus your request will be granted.”

“But,” said Stewart, gaily, “I do not want you to change, but to be always just as you are. If you

were anybody else, I would not have it in my heart to say anything."

"That, I suppose, you intend as a compliment, and to bribe me into being serious," she replied, playfully. "Well, I accept the price and close the bargain." Then, dropping her head, and looking amusingly demure, she added: "See how serious I am!"

Stewart was embarrassed by her coy ways and looks, but at last contrived to say:

"I have been with you a great deal for the last three months. Do you know what I mean?"

"So has Walter Sparker," she said, tossing her curls, with a coquettish grace, "and what does he mean?"

For a moment Edward blushed, and was confounded, but at last he resumed:

"The time has come for you to choose, Miss Standfast."

"It is impossible, Mr. Stewart. I can't do it. My heart can no more be fixed than a drop of quicksilver. You are too grave for a merry doll like me, and would soon become tired of me, like a little girl with her painted toy."

"Never, Miss Standfast, never," he replied, earnestly and firmly.

"Oh, what shall I do?" she exclaimed, wringing her hands, in assumed distress. "Papa always praises you, and mamma always praises Walter Sparker, and cook declares for Mr. Edward, and our waitress for Mr. Walter. All my cousins and relatives are equally divided. One of them told me the men in the shops

are having their bets about me—a poor, innocent, little lamb, who is not responsible for the storm, and yet suffers because it blows.”

“Miss Standfast,” answered Stewart, slightly offended, “let me ask you not to jest.”

“But I can’t help it,” she replied, pettishly. “I laugh just to see you looking so grave. Oh, I’m like the poor little bird which can’t tell on which tree to find shelter, and drops down on the ground to soil its bright, pretty feathers.”

“Miss Standfast,” said Edward, rising and almost angry, “if this continues I will have to leave you.”

“No, no, Mr. Stewart,” answered the gay girl, sobered instantly; “let me beg you not to be hasty. Shall I tell you, truly, what I think and feel?”

“As you value my happiness and my whole future life, Miss Standfast,” he said, with great emphasis of tone and manner. “I find myself neglecting my business, and in a very unpleasant situation, and I hope that you will answer me plainly and instantly.”

“Mr. Stewart,” she replied, with the most suitable gravity, “I have thought over this subject as deeply and as often as yourself. Seriously, I am not suitable to be your wife. You would forever regret that you married me.”

“You must let me take the risk of that!” he said, with a look of bitter disappointment.

“Oh, no sir. I, too, am a party to this contract, and your unhappiness would be my own. Your mother would never cordially consent, and between her and

my family there would be an unpleasant barrier. Besides, I am less of a bee than a butterfly. I could not help you in the struggle before you. Gay wings do not bring honey to the hive. Plain as my parents are, my tastes are expensive. Instead of economizing in your household, I would be a useless and extravagant plaything, and you would soon become weary of toiling for my support. I know you, and I know myself, and I know that I am right. You think that you love me so as to justify marriage. This is a dream and an error. I feel that even now I am piercing the bubble and dispelling the bright vision."

It was so. The girl's instincts were right. Edward Stewart felt it as she spoke. A veil seemed suddenly lifted, and he saw her and saw himself, and saw peril. Walter Sparker was a vain, weak, unprincipled gallant, and Belle Standfast's intimacy with him would become dangerous the moment his own counteracting influence was withdrawn.

This the girl perceived also. She felt a secret terror in drifting from the true heart of a man whose arm could always be relied on for her protection, and in flinging herself into the power of a man whom she might love but could never trust. Indeed, it was the crisis of her existence. Her whole future was in the decision of that brief moment.

Belle, looking into Edward's eye and grasping nervously his arm, said, almost beseechingly: "Mr. Stewart, you will be my brother! I know you will! I will need you! I feel that I will need you!"

He gazed steadily into her large and beautiful eye, and saw it dimmed with a tear. This was the farewell glance of his first youthful affection. He then said, sadly :

“Miss Standfast, you have understood our relation better than I. We will be to each other brother and sister. You will always find me a faithful friend.”

“You know, Mr. Stewart,” she resumed, “that I am a spoiled child, and rule my papa and my mamma, and, hence, I need a kind adviser. I hope that you will always be my true and loving brother. And now begin your new duties by escorting me to the store,” she added, with her former girlish gaiety. Thither they were proceeding when they encountered Walter Sparker. After the salutations of the morning, Edward left them together. Returning from the village store, they soon entered the parlor of John Standfast, and occupied the seats so recently left vacant. Yet how changed in a few minutes all the relations and circumstances within those same silent walls !

With the amazing and dangerous freedom of our American life, these young people call each other familiarly by their christened names.

“Belle,” began Walter, flirting his glove jauntily against her blooming cheek, “I have a favor to ask of you.”

“But don’t begin that way, Walter,” she said, pettishly ; “I don’t like it. You are too free with that glove, which you like to exhibit as a proof of your dainty, little aristocratic hand.”

"Nonsense, Belle," he said, blushing; "your arrows are very small and nicely pointed, but you intend them to be sharp as needles," he replied, drawing on his glove.

"Well, Walter," she answered, "needles are more suitable than daggers to wound delicate young fellows who can't bear much."

As she said this, she innocently picked to pieces a lovely rose, and scattered over the floor the bright leaves, filling the air with their fragrance, and lying at her feet the gay types of the fading and broken visions of youthful hope and love.

"By the way, Belle," said Walter, "I think that you are about as hard on your friends as your little fingers are on that rose. You scatter us right and left like leaves, but I don't think you get quite as sweet a scent as from that flower."

"Use more cologne and better quality," she replied, laughing. "You must either disguise yourself or sign the temperance pledge."

"I have made a pledge, my fairy," he said, with a reckless air; "but it is a pledge never to take a pledge, and to be free to get all the honey I can out of life, and as little of the sting and poison as possible. Now, I want you to sign with me right on the spot."

"But what am I to sign? Explain," she added, "and I will please you if I can."

"We are to have a jolly season," he answered; "plays, concerts, operas in endless number and varieties, with the brightest stars ever seen in New York. My

private car is always at my disposal. Now, what's the use of eternally asking your parents whether you shall go with me, and having a family discussion; your father on one side and your mother on the other; servants ditto; and this whole infernal village babbling over our affairs. Quit making people quarrel and take the matter into your own hand. Assert your liberty, and, little despot that you are, after a short fuss everybody will yield and leave you to your own will, and we'll have a grand old winter."

"Walter," she said, not with firmness, "that wouldn't look well. It offends my taste. I know that I am giddy and reckless, but I hate what seems improper. Yet it is a bother to have all you do talked over and fussed over until the heart is out of your frolic. Before I can do anything I am always sick of the trouble it costs. Liberty would be a very nice thing."

"Make a declaration of independence, Belle," he said, with a wink and a laugh. "Run up your own colors for a free fight. You are sure to win. You always do. You must be queen, whatever you attempt, and rule others as you rule me. I am going to-night to Booth's to see Iago. Accept my invitation and inform your mother that the engagement's made. She'll make it all right with your father, and you'll reign in this house and do as you please."

"I won't promise, Walter," she replied; "but I will accept your invitation, and think over it whether I will ask permission, or announce my royal pleasure. It is

a bold step and means a great deal, and I'm not quite ready for it."

"Agreed," said Sparker. "Be prepared for the seven o'clock train. My carriage will call for you. We must be at the theater by eight. I will telegraph for a box."

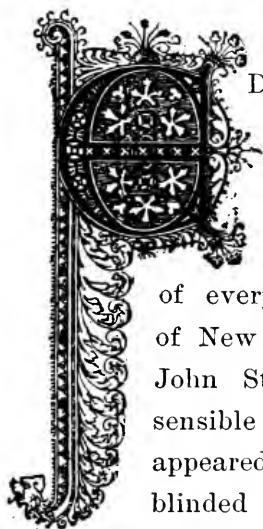
It is needless to say that Belle followed the suggestion of Walter. She proclaimed her independence. During the whole season she was her own mistress. Her parents no longer interposed a restraint or even made an inquiry. A gay gallant and a splendid car were always at her disposal. She could not be insensible to such a tribute to her beauty. The entertainments were brilliant. Genius never sparkled brighter. All that money could command from two continents blazed through the winter in the Metropolis. After the musical or dramatic enjoyments, Walter and Belle had the most costly dainties and expensive wines Delmonico could furnish. The pleasures of sense followed the excitements of the imagination. That season was one whirl of delights. The young man and woman surrendered themselves to the joys of the hour, reckless of consequences. Life swept them along its swift current, on either side of its banks gay and beautiful flowers, aloft on the gorgeous clouds the temple of pleasure, in the breeze music, and on the wave exhilaration, and in the beat of every pulse the intoxication of youth and health. While the guardian angel gazed sadly from the shore, a demon leered over them in the dimming distance, and just around the bend

of the stream were the roar and the plunge of the inevitable cataract.



CHAPTER VIII.

THE ANVIL.



EDWARD STEWART was greatly disturbed by the increasing intimacy between Walter Sparker and Belle Standfast after the events described in our last chapter. Many nights of every week they spent amid the gaieties of New York. Stewart sometimes gazed on John Standfast, wondering if he was as insensible to the peril of his daughter as he appeared. And Mrs. Standfast! Was she blinded by her ambition? Over them all a dark cloud seemed gathering.

With so many doubts and fears he was relieved, when John Standfast desired a confidential conversation, but even more alarmed when he discovered that the subject of it was not to be Belle.

"Mr. Stewart," began John, "I wish to have your advice about a most difficult question. My duty is not plain. A mist seems settling over everything and I have lost my way. I somehow feel in talking to you I will see what I ought to do."

"You know, John," said Edward, "I am always at your service. You were my friend in need, and I

must be your friend indeed. State your case and I will give you all the help in my power."

"I was invited last night to attend a meeting of the strikers, and I went."

"That, indeed, astonishes me. I thought your great purpose was to defeat their plans, and that you would have no communication with them. To have found myself in their midst would not have amazed me more."

"You are both right and wrong," replied John, thoughtfully. "I think that capital often oppresses labor, and that labor has a right to protect itself against capital. I sympathize with the end proposed by the strikers, while I wholly disapprove the means they employ. Standing thus between Capital and Labor, and, in my position as master mechanic, nearly equally connected with both, it becomes my duty to do what I can to reconcile their conflicting feelings and interests. In the midst of war, I seek peace between the parties."

"Well spoken, John, and like yourself!" cried Edward. "I see your position, and I honor it. Nor is it dissimilar to my own. How can I assist you?"

"Some New York Socialists were at the meeting last night, and, worse than all, Ruric, the Nihilist," replied Standfast. "Many dangerous and abominable things were said and done which General Sparker ought to know. There is peril all around us to life and property. I can't trust Bidman, and to tell him what occurred would be the act of a traitor to men whose invitation I

accepted. But is it not otherwise with General Sparker? He is my true and tried friend, the President of the road, and a man in whom I can confide. Besides, I am under no pledge of secrecy. Would I violate my honor by confiding to General Sparker the proceedings of a meeting attended under the circumstances I have described?"

"I confess, that is a hard question," answered Edward, puzzled for a moment. "You do not want to feel you have betrayed the men, and you do not want to keep from your friend and employer a knowledge of his danger."

"That is it!" said Standfast. "I am entirely in doubt. I do not know what to do. My way seems dark."

"I think I have it!" exclaimed Edward, in a cheerful and confident tone. "Your first obligation is to the road, and to General Sparker as its representative. Life and property are involved, and also the peace, and, indeed, the very existence of society. You did not ask the secrets of the men, and you did not promise silence. It is a most extraordinary case, and requires extraordinary conduct. Hesitate no longer. In my opinion, your obligation arising from your position is paramount."

"Thank you, thank you," answered John, as if a mountain was suddenly lifted from him. "It is all plain now. A mist seems to have cleared from my brain. I felt sure in talking with you I would recover my path. I will go, and you must go with me."

"I doubt that, John."

"But I do not," said Standfast, with a firm and assured look and voice. "General Sparker is too old for action, and he will need us both. Bidman and Walter he can never trust. They are enemies to his whole policy, and the men despise and detest them, so that they could do nothing but make the strife more bitter and dangerous. In this crisis we must fall back on you. Besides, I want you for a witness. If I go to General Sparker on this business, you must go with me."

"Agreed!" said Edward. "Name your time."

"This evening at eight o'clock at the General's house. I will send him notice."

The men separated, and at the appointed hour were together in the library of the veteran President. He was in a neat, plain, ample gown, which showed his person to the best advantage as he sat in his great chair beside a table covered over with various kinds of electrical apparatus, including a recent invention of Edward Stewart. The grand old man did not use the privilege of age to live in the past, or even in the present. His intellectual strength was now devoted to a future he would never live to see. This caused the fire of youth to burn unchilled by the snows of eighty years. His face was thin, but his form unbent, and his eye bright with intelligence and enthusiasm. Rising from his chair he extended his hand and gave his friends a warm welcome, saying:

"I was glad, John, to receive your note. I am still more glad to see you both here. It is, indeed, a pleasure to have you with me this evening."

After a short desultory conversation, Standfast said :

“General, after consulting Mr. Stewart, I thought it was my duty to tell you some matters of great importance. But I am afraid to trouble and perhaps I might alarm you.”

“Alarm me !” said the General, smiling. “I think I am too old to be frightened. Do you remember nearly a quarter of century since, when our men sought to mob our shops and I went into a crazy crowd to talk with the fellows ? Two rascals seized me and threw me into the river. I swam out, went back to the same spot, and began where I left off. They repeated the experiment a second time, and I, dripping, commenced again. After a third bath, I succeeded in dispersing the rabble.”

“Yes,” answered John, laughing heartily. “They doused you under, and you swam like a beaver, and talked like a preacher, minding the water no more than a Newfoundland dog.”

“And next night, John, do you recollect how they surrounded the house with torches to burn us up, yelling like demons ?”

“Well ! General, well ! You and old Colonel Fleming sat still and finished your game of cards without raising an eye or moving a muscle. I could see you through the windows, in the glare of the torches. All those mobbers were looking, too. Your courage subdued them, and saved you.”

“So, Mr. Stewart,” said the General, addressing Edward with his beaming smile, “you see that I

was threatened with water one day, and fire the next. Drowning and burning! Yet here I am to laugh over the adventure; after such a life as mine, there is not much cause to be alarmed. Besides," he added, solemnly and reverently, "my trust is in one who rules the universe better than I can do."

"All right," exclaimed John; "I have no more fears on the subject. You shall know what I have seen and heard."

"And I shall tell you," said the General, "what I think of your communication."

"I attended last night the meeting of the 'Labor Club,'" resumed Standfast. "Some present were mere boys, ready for a frolic. Others were idle, drinking, worthless fellows, deeply in debt, and who gain by any change. A third class was composed of industrious men, of hot passions and prejudices, ignorant and badly disposed, and wrought into frenzy by a few New York Nihilists, until they are ready for fire, blood, and ruin. These fellows are sure to make us trouble."

"But," said the General, with an expression of pain and disappointment, "where are the men who own their homes and have wives and children to support? I have relied on these to control the rest. Their property and their families make them conservative. And then have they lost all regard for me? Have they forgotten what I have done for them? My life seems a failure, and human nature without hope."

"Not so, General," cried Standfast, earnestly.

"Your policy is indeed sorely tried, but it will triumph. You are universally loved and respected. Your school, your college, hospital and infirmary are proofs to all of your benevolence. The ignorant you teach, the sick you cure, the wounded you heal, the aged and infirm you support by your noble charities, are daily lessons and make their powerful impression. But others, just now, are shaping the policy of the road, and many evil influences are conspiring to cause danger everywhere. The Nihilists, too, are busy as devils, and will turn this world into hell if they can."

"I had hoped for quiet," said the General, sadly, "but the storm has come, and we must meet it. I think Dr. Bidman is mistaken, and his views increase our difficulties. His house is like a fort, bristling with guns; and he boasts he will shoot down these men like dogs. Such talk only infuriates them, especially when they see he is ready to follow his words with bullets. Oh, that my dear son, Walter, was fitted to stand by the side of his old father, and support him with his young strength!"

A tear dropped from the eye of the General as he said this, and his friends were deeply moved. Their hearts were linked to him by a stronger tie than ever.

During the conversation I have recorded, Edward Stewart had remained silent. He now said:

"General, may I not venture a suggestion? Would it not be better for you to have arms in your own house, and a guard around it?"

"Never, Mr. Stewart," replied the noble man, with

the utmost vehemence. "Never! I will burn first. My plan has been to govern by justice and by benevolence. If these fail me, I wish to die. Perish this hand, before it would level a weapon against one of my workmen, even the most murderous! I am too old now for a stain of blood in my own defence. None are dependent on me. I stand alone, and am responsible but for myself. Let the solitary trunk be cut down, but injure none as it falls upon its mother earth."

The breasts of his friends heaved as they heard these simple, eloquent words, and they could with difficulty restrain their tears. Edward at last summoned resolution to begin again.

"I honor your courage, General, admire your wisdom, and think that you are right as regards your own property. But may I not ask if a different rule should not apply to the property of the Company?"

"There, I think," he replied, "the case is different, and I should act not according to my own private views and feelings, but the opinions and wishes of the stockholders and directors."

"Will you not, then, sir," inquired Stewart, "direct us precisely what to do. We must act by authority, and yours is the highest."

"Do this," he replied immediately. "Provide pistols, rifles and powder, and a water-tank for the roof of the shops. Have two or three men keep guard at night, and telegraph both to the State and the Federal authorities for troops in case assistance be needed. Let all be arranged secretly, but promptly and efficiently. I

suspect this Strike will convulse the whole country. It will be a social and political earthquake."

"You shall be obeyed to the letter," said John, "and what you have directed is all that can be done. Now, General, that we have disposed of these important matters, I have a small personal favor to ask of you."

"Ask, John," he replied; "it shall be granted, to the half of my kingdom," he added, with a benevolent smile. "I can deny nothing to a faithful friend like you, and you are never unreasonable. What is it?"

"I want to see the anvil on which you wrought in the early years of your manhood," said Standfast, with one of his quiet, quizzical looks.

"Your request shall be granted," answered the General, pulling the bell. He gave directions to the servant that the gardener and coachman should bring the anvil down from the attic, where it had long stood, worn by work, and rusty with age. When the men carried it into the parlor and placed it on the table of the General, he viewed it with deep emotion, and his friends examined it with the most profound interest and attention.

"What a comment on my life!" began the venerable man. "My father and my grandfather beat that anvil with their honest sledges and bedewed it with the sweat of their toil! How often, when a child, I saw the sparks fly from it! This arm of mine struck on it many a hard blow, and brought from it a living for my young wife and two children during the five happiest years of my existence. I love and honor it as the

foundation of the colossal fortune with which I have been blessed by Heaven! It reminds me that I was myself a laborer, recalls, as such, my toils and trials, and keeps me in sympathy with every humble workman in the world. Poverty and wealth are visible together in that anvil, and it unites my own heart to the two opposite extremes of society. Pardon me, my friends," he added, as if ashamed of his own excited feeling, which might seem vanity. "Pardon me! I have said too much, and will change the subject. Mr. Stewart, I have heard a great deal about this Nihilist, Ruric. Have you ever seen him? I should like to know something of his history and character."

"I have seen him a few times," replied Stewart, "and he is a wonderful man. His appearance is most striking. He is a noble, portly-looking fellow. In size, shape and bearing, fit for the throne of the Czar, but with a villainous leer in the eye, and a passion in his speech that results from some partial insanity."

"What is the secret of his influence?" inquired the General. "I am told that his words kindle the men into the wildest frenzy, and that he is the soul of this social movement which threatens such wide ruin."

"It is not the eloquence of mere general declamation," said Edward, "which produces these effects, although he possesses the greatest fluency and is a master of our own language."

"Tell me, then," said the General, with awakened curiosity, "what is the spell he wields with so much power."

"He points to himself, General," replied Edward. "He intensifies his arguments by his own experience. He claims to be a visible proof of the hate and rage of tyrants. It is the tale of his wrongs which lashes our men into fury, and makes them ready for fire and blood and the very destruction of society. I happened once to hear him at a street corner, and I do not wonder that ignorant laborers are excited and deluded by his words."

"Tell, tell me," said the General, "what he says of himself. I wish to hear his story."

"He proclaimed himself to be a Russian nobleman," answered Edward, "who, after the emancipation, gave more than half his estate to the Commune for the benefit of the liberated serfs, and who was willing to give all to secure liberty in Russia. After granting so much to the people—trial by jury, a free press, the right of speech in local assemblies—thus exciting enthusiasm for a brilliant future, he says the Emperor became alarmed, fixed again his royal fetter on every movement, quenched the very hopes he had kindled, filled the land with spies, and, on their testimony, the mines and prisons of Siberia with exiled wretches to whom life was made torture. He declares that he, himself, punished for the illusions of youth created by the Czar, lived in a charnel house, clammy with fungus, every moment ready to drop on him in ruin, the air fetid, and the dirt deadly in his loathsome den. Once he was flogged until he fainted, recovered with a dash of water, then felled to the earth with a

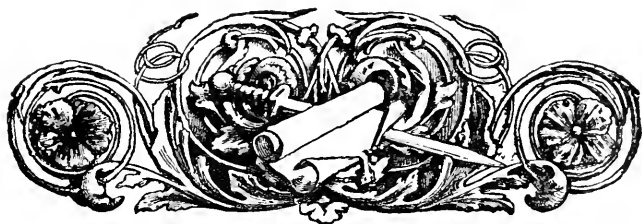
prison key, and afterwards tied with other wretches, beaten, bruised and bloody, and flung in one heap of human misery in the yard of the prison. He escaped, and after months of toil, hunger and suffering, which seemed to have nearly crazed him, he found an American ship, and succeeded in reaching this country. I confess, when I heard him, my own blood boiled and burned, and I could understand how men in despair might be driven into any crime that would end their lives and their miseries."

"This is, indeed, interesting," said the General. "But true progress never came from assassination. It must spring from intelligence and virtue. The consciousness of mankind must always array itself against secret murder, which is forbidden, both by the law of man and by the law of God. Whatever is right, that is surely wrong. Assassination is a dastardly crime and can bear no good fruit."

"Of course, I agree with you," said Edward. "Yet, we cannot wonder that our thoughtless and ignorant workmen are misled by this eloquent maniac, made such by tyranny. Like a demon, he hungers for blood. He flies over this country with the torch of a fury, and will kindle a flame difficult to extinguish. Indeed, General, my only hope is in your own honest work. The best answer to these fanatics is in the wisdom and benevolence of your own character, and the institutions you have founded for the good of the laborer. The storm will gather most violently here, and here we must be ready to break its force. If

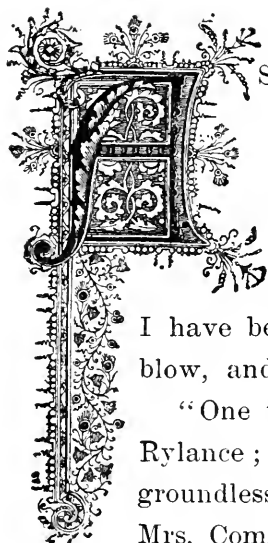
we can conquer here, order will soon be established through the entire country. In the social and political freedom of our Republic, and the justice and philanthropy of its great capitalists is to be found the remedy for that destruction coveted by the blind and furious Nihilists."

These three men now parted, feeling that they were united by a deathless purpose, conscious that their loyalty to truth and duty would soon be severely tested, and yet believing that they would conquer, and in their victory achieve a triumph for their country and the world.



CHAPTER IX.

NAVAL ACADEMY.



St the Mermaid with all sail set and a spanking breeze stood into the Chesapeake, Captain Jolly said to Mr. Rylance :

"I promised to tell you about this sea-business and now I'll do it.

I have been followin' it some years, lull and blow, and I ought to know."

"One thing I must confess," answered Mr. Rylance ; "my fears for your discipline were groundless. A sailor's hoe-down, danced with Mrs. Commodore, Captain, and crew, to Tom Tar's fiddle, did not hinder your men from obeying orders during a storm and bringing your ship out of great peril. The fellows could not have behaved better."

"I'd like to see 'em do anything else. Obey orders! I can use a handspike or belayin' pin about as strong as the next master, if they'd dare to disobey me. But you see it's seldom necessary."

"Well, I will admit at the outset, that you and Mrs. Jolly in the fun, with old Tom's merry face and fiddle, help rather than harm your control of your ship."

"Look back, Mr. Rylance," said the Captain ; and

both men turned and gazed over the stern of the brig. "See out there on that ocean, in full view, twenty sail! Nice sight sich an evenin'; no cloud to tell of storms to-night; the sun shinin' bright on yon white canvas; every rag out; jib and topsail, and skysail, and all bellyin' in the breeze! Nothin' in a sailor's eye than that nearer heaven. That's outside! Inside you find hell afloat in nineteen of them twenty. I have been five times round the globe, and it's the same in every part of this world. Hell in the 'tother may be in the fire, but here it's on the water, as I know from seeing it."

"You surprise me, indeed," exclaimed Mr. Rylance. "I have shared the common opinion that sailors were just the jolliest fellows living."

"Jolliest!" he replied, "jolliest! Yes! after a tough voyage, comin' hungry and desperate into port, to be devoured by land-sharks, who leave enough to spend for two days on bad women and bad whisky, and then dragged back, drunk, in chains, for another cruise, where they're happy as devils, for that's jest what they've been made, and nothin' else. Their mad frolics drown their miseries."

"I am astonished more and more," said Mr. Rylance, "at your picture; it is so entirely different from the popular belief."

"I tell you again," burst out the Captain, "generally a ship's a hell, and no mistake. Scarcely a master dares show himself without dirk and pistol, or stand a minute where his men could have a chance to pitch

him over the bulwarks to feed the fishes for not feedin' his crew."

"I hope you will explain yourself," replied Mr. Rylance. "You are quite unintelligible to me."

"All's plain in two words," replied the Captain, thrusting his rough hands deeper into his great pockets, and rolling his quid with more emphatic fury—"Overwork and undergrub! There, you have it! With the owners, big profits make pop'lar captains. Hence, few men and poor grub, to swell the ship's earnin's and please the big wigs. All comes out of limbs and stomachs of the crew. Work a sailor sixteen hours out of twenty-four, on bad pork, spoiled biscuit, and rye coffee, with no appetizer but oaths and blows, and you don't make him an angel. He's ready to please the devil by any villainy, but first of all by givin' the captain to the sharks, and teachin' him, by goin' down their maws, his moral duty to feed the hungry. It stands to natur'! Overwork and undergrub will make any ship a hell, and if the sailors get a chance, pitch any master to the fishes. Give your men good tack, sound bacon, lively coffee, and a little whisky in a blow to keep off rheumatics; let 'em have, on a fair evenin', a jolly dance to jolly music, and, at the right time, spice 'em with any other fun, and sailors will die for their masters, instead of flingin' them overboard. You'll get more work out of them, besides, and they'll thank you for lettin' 'em do it."

"I think you have sound philosophy on your side, Captain Jolly, and I am perfectly satisfied. I will

never fear old Tom's fiddle, nor your own heels, any more. Innocent frolic relieves the monotony of the voyage, and preserves sympathy between your men and yourself."

"So the owners think, now," said the captain, with a self-approving smile on his good-natured face. "I've converted them. At first they growled, and swore Jack Jolly had too many men and gave 'em too expensive grub; but they've learned better, and now they let him have his own way; and their women will visit the families of my boys when they're sick, and send them a Christmas turkey, and that makes good feelin' that shows itself on deck, and most in many a hard blow, blusterin' to sink us in the sea."

"This is a most interesting conversation," interposed Mr. Rylance, "full of manly sense and right feeling, and I will never forget it, I assure you."

"Yes! it's true," replied the Captain; "true as Gospel. You must send honest grub, kind hearts and pleasant words afore Bibles, tracts and missionaries, if you'd convert sailors. Its policy after all. Not a ship in New York harbor pays such profits as this Mermaid."

"I most sincerely hope," replied Mr. Rylance, earnestly, "that you will convince all ship-owners of the truth of your views. It would work a mighty change for good."

"Yes!" answered Jolly, "I know one company with a fleet of twenty ships, employing hundreds of men. The President lives on the avenue in a palace, spends

half his time in Europe, as if America was'nt good enough, and got great reputation by building a church. But his sailors are worked and starved into devils to pay for his piety. If he'd feed his men better, and drive 'em less, he'd be nearer heaven, according to my thinking. Let him spend less on his palace and build a hospital for the poor fellows when sick, old and broken, and the Nihilists wouldn't make half the trouble with their pisin and their dynamite."

Not long after this conversation, when the Commodore and the Captain were in the cabin, they heard a gentle knock at the door, and they soon admitted Tip and Lil, who looked embarrassed. Noticing their modest hesitation, the woman said :

"Wal ! don't be sceered ! Speak out your minds ! Nothin' so dreadful in me and the Captain."

Thus encouraged, Tip ventured to say :

"Captain, I have heard that your ship stops for repairs at Delaney, the next port on the bay. I think I can make some money there, if you'll let me."

"Yes, my lad, it's true, I'm sorry to own," answered Jolly. "That storm tumbled the Mermaid considerable, and thumped through her stomach in an unkind way. We must stop the cracks or she'll take more water than's good for her digestion, and she may sink in a fit of the colic in the next blow and carry us along with her among the sharks. We've got to stick three days in that tobacco hole mendin' our ways, and fixin' up for another noreaster."

"Will you give me that old elastic hose, Captain Jolly?" timidly inquired the boy. "The mate says it's useless, and I can make money out of it, I'm sure."

"Money out of it," exclaimed Jolly, in astonishment. "It wouldn't sell for a ship's nail. You might as well try to get a cent for this old pipe of mine which I mean to toss into the big pond when I go next on deck. So you can have the hose in welcome, and if you can make a copper out of it, you may take Jack Jolly's tarpaulin."

"Thank you, Captain; thank you ever so much," replied the boy.

"And Mrs. Commodore," interposed Lil, in her low musical voice, "Tip wants three pans and your gold fish. Won't you lend them to him to-morrow evening?"

"Pans and fish," cried the laughing Jolly, almost splitting himself with his merriment.

"Pans and fish," said Mrs. Commodore, in absolute dismay and bewilderment. "Don't mean to have a fry, boy? My goldies were never meant to be swallowed. Can't do it, Tip, can't do it; by no means."

Her gold fish gilded the childless life of the Commodore into all the poetry it ever knew. An expensive and splendid glass globe was their home, so suspended as to swing with the ship and avoid the motion of the sea. There now sported the glittering creatures! One was gliding around the vessel, another

was panting at the surface, a third on balanced fin was in the middle, while the fourth, apparently frightened, was swimming swiftly round with his gold flashing and his crimson flushing in the brilliant beams of the morning sun which poured down from a sky-light. Perhaps this alarmed fish had understood the conversation, or had a prescience of the adventurous change of habits for which he was solicited, and was therefore seeking flight.

Looking at her beautiful pets displaying their glories in that swinging globe, we cannot wonder at the surprise of the Commodore. After her blank and indignant refusal, all was embarrassed silence until, recovering her faculties, she again exclaimed:

"Pans and fish! You little rascal, would you breakfast on these beauties, and smack your lips over them? I'll see you to the bottom first."

"Oh, Mrs. Commodore," interposed Lil, at once amused and alarmed; "Tip won't hurt your fish. You don't understand him. Please wait until he explains. He'll make more gold out of your fish than is shining on their scales."

"Yes!" said Captain Jack, always happy in the atmosphere of a joke and ready to help it on, "that's fair. Mrs. Commodore mustn't smell frying pans too soon. Tell us, lad, jest what you want."

"If the Mermaid stops for repairs a few days at Delaney," answered Tip, persuasively, "I want an exhibition for Lil and me. She'll dance on the rope, sing and play, and I'll perform my tricks, and so

we'll make a lot of money, and give you and the crew a half."

"A fair offer," replied the Captain; "but afore I agree, I want to know what you propose with them hose, pans and gold fish."

"If you'll let me get the hose and the pans, I'll soon show you," said Tip, running eagerly to the door and speedily returning with the articles in question.

"You see," he resumed, "these three pans are of different sizes, so that one fits in another, and I can hold them all under my left arm. The hose I'll cut into three pieces and wind each piece around my body, and have for each a stopper I can pull out. I will fill all of them with water, and in one will put the gold fish, and over all wear my magician's gown. Then I'll stand out on the platform, away from every person, and take out the stopper from the first hose, and let the water into my pan, and show it to the people. I'll do the same with the second pan and hose, and the third time I'll bring out the gold fish, and I know they'll clap me and pay me well."

"Fust rate!" burst out the captain. "That trick 'll bring you into port, and sell your cargo beside for ready cash. We'll advartis you well, and get all the town to see your performance, and help you, too, ourselves."

"But," said Lil, in her most winning tones and with her sweetest looks, "Tip wants, too, the Commodore's tame rabbits, one of her ducks, lots of eggs,

some cabbages, carrots, and ever so many¹ more things."

"Why, you're crazy as porpoises afore a storm," exclaimed Mrs. Jolly, in astonishment and consternation, "when they jump out of the sea, because they can't stay in, and behave like ocean-lunies."

"And, Captain Jolly," said Tip, kindled with the enthusiasm of his profession; "I'll want that old cupboard, and the carpenter to fix it, and the Mermaid's swivel, too!"

"Stop, lad, stop!" cried the Captain; "don't you want my masts and anchors? P'r'aps you'll take me, too. Better ask for the Mermaid, crew, cargo, and good-will of the craft."

"Oh, you're the head of the ship," said Lil, laughing; "it wouldn't do to take away the head, for that would kill everything."

"Head," replied the Commodore, with a feminine sneer. "Head! yes! figger-head! I'm the rale thing."

"The Captain masters the ship, and the Commodore masters the Captain," said Jolly, with a merry, ringing laugh.

However, it was all at last arranged, and Tip had his own way, and was soon the soul of the occasion. Mr. Rylance also came into the spirit of the sport, and everything on the Mermaid was in preparation for the novel exhibition in Delaney.

How marvelous this mastery of genius! How everything submits to its sway! How it multiplies and glorifies into success the few and mean agencies around

it! Tip was endued with the gifts of his race, and had improved them by three times seeing the performances of the famous Hermann, and meditating on his observations until he felt in himself the power to accomplish. His quick glance seized his opportunity, and the Mermaid—Commodore, Captain, crew, passengers, and everything on board—was suddenly transformed into a place of preparation for the coming exhibition, while, amid all, this mere lad was the acknowledged director, imparting to every movement intelligence and enthusiasm.

When the Mermaid touched the port of Delaney, Mr. Rylance, imbued with the spirit of the young leader, immediately went ashore, secured a large tobacco-warehouse for the exhibition, had advertisements inserted in the paper, and posted through town and country, and thus contributed all in his power to the success of the novel enterprise.

When the eventful day arrived, many mysterious articles were carried, with various concealments, by the sailors through the village, and thus increased the public expectancy. At last, the hour appointed comes. The streets swarm with people. Both town and country swell the crowd. Every seat is taken, and the large building packed.

Tip and Lil first performed on guitar and harp, and then united in a song with an accompaniment on their instruments. Bursts of rude applause gave token of complete success. Next, the youthful magician retired a moment behind the screen, and then introduced

himself by a brief speech, at once modest and amusing. Attired with his loose gown, with his glittering eye and bright face, he soon brought all under his spell. He took packs of cards from the mouths, noses, sleeves and pantaloons of astounded rustics. He cooked an omelette in his hat, and drew out of it eggs, turnips, cabbages, strewn and piled on the floor, and finally the two white rabbits of the Commodore, who sat laughing and clapping in uproarious excitement, while Captain Jolly himself seemed one broad grin of pleasure. Now, from the same small but exhaustless receptacle, Tip unrolled scores of yards of telegraph paper, and out from the whirl of the confusing circles leaped the old duck which had quacked and waddled over the deck of the Mermaid. When the lad, standing by himself, produced the three pans of water from his person, the last containing the gold-fish swimming around in their unconscious beauty, the spectators were dumb in their amazement.

Tip then pointed to the cupboard on the rear of the stage, exclaiming :

“See that! Look under it! Its legs are just three feet high. No man can get out of it, and you not see him. I’ll turn it round. Examine it well! Tom Tar, come forward! Here you are! Ivory set in ebony! Jump in, old Africa! All safe! Light as a sugar-cask in a Maryland pantry! Can no more get out than cousin monkey caged with his happy family.”

While Tip continued in this vein, Tom ran grinning through the front door and down the aisle, and leaping

on the platform, waived his old tarpaulin amid the cheers of the astonished people. He had emerged through a secret door in the back of the cupboard, slid along a board concealing him from view, and climbing out a window, soon made his appearance, as we have described.

When the applause had subsided, Tip came gracefully forward and began again :

“Now for the best of the evening ! Here’s a hat taken from Captain Jolly’s head ! Look at it ! I tear it in pieces ! Captain, I ram your property, bit-by-bit into the Mermaid’s cannon ! All is down ! I point the gun upward ! Look well ! I swing round this lighted coal ! One ! two ! three ! fire ! Explodes like thunder ! Captain Jolly ! Look aloft ! Your hat is hanging on yon roof, and I’ll send up Tom Tar to bring it down.”

Tip had dexterously substituted another hat for that given him by the Mermaid’s master, and while occupying the attention of the people, one of the sailors had conveyed the real article by an outside ladder to the roof of the building, and hung it on the inside by means of a small trap door.

Lil now made her appearance in her brilliant costume, sang, danced, tumbled, and then ran up and down a rope stretched from the floor to the roof of the building, balancing herself with her pole, and displaying her exquisite grace and agility, until she seemed to those wondering spectators like a celestial visitant sent at once to delight and astonish their favored village.

Mr. Rylance concluded the evening by reciting a poem written for the occasion, and which excited roars of laughter and thunders of rude approbation.

A political menagerie of beasts, both tame and wild,
I'll show now to the public which here on me has smiled;
Lo, from every land and clime the curious creatures come,
And all so very hungry, and most so very dumb.

See! Appears the Eel Political, which can so turn and twist,
Which slips out from your fingers, and glides e'en from your fist.
And when the fellow's peel'd and skinn'd he wriggles in the pot,
Both squirming when he's living and squirming when he's not.

The Political Hyena, like his brother, o'er a grave
Will he scent the flesh he wants below, and looks so very brave!
How fierce and shrill his midnight yell! what flashes in his eye!
But let the daylight on his bone, and see the coward fly!

Next, Political the Peacock, why aloft his tail in air;
Because the gaping people will at his colors stare.
He struts and spreads his feathers, and he looks, so proud and fine,
And all to show the *stolen* hues that in his plumage shine.

And the wily Snake Political, a serpent in the grass,
Which even in republics will wind and twist, alas!
You think his glitter beautiful, 'till, with a glare and hiss,
He darts out swift his poison-fang, and seldom makes a miss.

Oh! Political, the Lion, he will fare the very worst;
His nature, so magnanimous, e'en seems to make him curst;
Since, in their fury, will the wild beasts, rush on him, yell and bite,
'Till sinks their king majestic, just weary of the fight.

And Political, the People, are ye like the ass or mule,
That such a mean and filthy crew forever you befool?
Oh, Political, the People, be ye wise, and henceforth show
That ye citizens are *men*, and not like brutes below!

When her repairs had been completed, the Mermaid sailed before a splendid breeze between the shores of the exquisite Chesapeake. On the second day from Delaney she entered the lovely Severn to touch at Annapolis. It was evening and the light had just began to flash over the waves from Greensbury Point, while Tolley's Point reflected the golden glory of the west. Far up the river, the bordering hills of Round Bay were tinged with a scarce visible purple. One by one, the gas-lamps began to gleam from the streets of the ancient Capital of Maryland and from among the trees on the charming grounds of the Naval Academy. Over all was seen the bright face of the old clock, and, owing to a lull in the wind, nine strokes from its slow and solemn hammer pealed over the waters before the Mermaid was out of the Chesapeake. Now, above the blue misty shores of Kent Island rose, in full glory, the circle of the moon, flinging her soft radiance over the dancing waves, and, when slightly obscured by a thin white cloud, leaving here and there patches of brilliant light, through which would glide into the gloom a silent, ghostly sail.

Mr. Rylance, Tip and Lil bade farewell to the Commodore, Captain and crew of the Mermaid, and were rowed by two lusty fellows to the pier of the Naval Academy. Just as they disembarked a man

emerged from the shadow, and gazed curiously and earnestly at the company. Apparently satisfied with his observations, he advanced toward them saying :

“Rylance, is this you?”

“Rob Sheldon, glad to see you,” he replied, extending his hand and grasping that of his friend.

“All well at home?” inquired Rob, in a subdued voice.

“Yes! when I saw them two weeks since,” replied Mr. Rylance, also in a whisper. “Did you get my note?”

“What else brought me here, old fellow?” answered Rob, with a low laugh. “At your old tricks! Never thought you would be after this sort of fun with your sheepskin in your pocket.”

“This is my last chance, Rob,” said Rylance. “After this I will reform, and stop playing the boy. I thought I would have one more, and I knew you were ready for it.”

“All right,” whispered Rob. “Will this boy and girl do? A mistake would explode us like a bursted Parrott. You have told them what to do.”

“Yes,” said Rylance, “just as I explained in the letter. All is arranged. You may rely on them. They gave a wonderful performance at Delaney.”

At this moment the boom of the evening gun rolled over the waters, up the Severn, and down toward the Chesapeake, and, thundering and reverberating, told the people on the Eastern Shore, thirty miles away, that the pointers on the face of the Naval Academy

clock indicated the hour of half-past nine. Scarcely had the report died into silence when a blaze of illumination burst from the trees and buildings on the grounds, and streamed into the sky, and flashed far over the sparkling waves. Then the glad music of the band proclaimed that over the floor of the old Gymnasium were the whirling forms of hundreds of gay dancers assembled from every part of the land for the grand occasion of the June Ball.

"Come with me," said Rob Sheldon to Tip and Lil, who, arrayed in their most brilliant costumes, stood in the light of the moon with harp and guitar, and their mysterious box, awaiting orders. "You must do just as I tell you," he added, as the party walked along the sea-wall road to the armory, under whose shadows they halted. Rob, in a low voice, gave the most minute instructions to the young performers, and, as the music was about to cease, he proceeded with them to the door of the Gymnasium, which was always used for these annual brilliant festive occasions.

Our young cadet midshipman, as the dancing ceased, escorted Tip and Lil up the stair and within the splendid room with the most business-like sincerity. He and they stood unabashed in the blaze of the assemblage, where appeared the President of the Republic, the members of the cabinet, foreign ambassadors in their jeweled magnificence, and foreign generals in the glitter of their orders, military and naval officers of the republic in their crimson scarfs and gold epaulettes, and the beauty of the land smiling and beaming with

gems and grace and joy, and inspiring an enthusiasm of admiration.

Tip and Lil were now left to their own resources. The company supposed them in disguise, and a part of the performance and their appearance excited surprise and pleasure. Inspired by the brilliant scene, they played and sang with unusual beauty and power. Lil danced on her rope with more than her ordinary grace, and, poised in mid-air, really appeared some angelic shape, sent to awaken celestial thoughts in this terrestrial sphere.

The strange performance closed, amid the wildest applause, by an ode composed by Mr. Rylance, and sung by Tip and Lil, with harp and guitar :

Hurrah! Our stars are o'er the sea!

Yon flag our sires unfurled!

They shed their blood for it, that we

Might bear it o'er the world.

Hurrah! Our stars gleam from our mast!

Our foemen we defy!

'Mid tempest rage, with skies o'ereast,

Our banner still shall fly!

Hurrah! Our stars shall guard our ship,

And shine by day and night!

Let triumph burst from every lip,

Since Heaven helps freemen fight!

Hurrah! Our stars beam o'er the free!

Our banner floats for them!

A sign to earth of liberty,

And every star a gem!

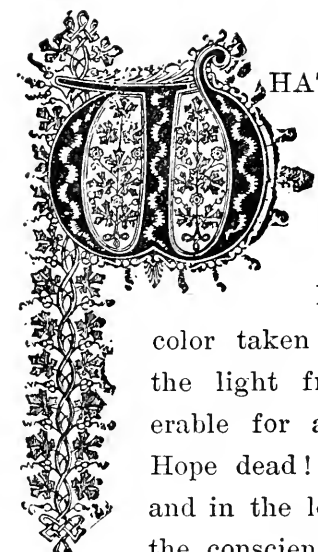
Hurrah! Our stars o'er sailors wave,
Whose blood in death shall flow!
Hurrah! Our thunders Freedom save!
Our hearts with Freedom glow!

Hurrah! hurrah! Men of the sea!
What glories in our past!
What ocean-heroes bled, that we
Might make those glories last!



CHAPTER X.

FADED BEAUTY.



WHAT sadder than a faded rose! Bloom gone, fragrance vanished, its little day of beauty passed forever! One thing is sadder. A faded heart! Especially a heart faded in its youth. The color taken prematurely from the cheek and the light from the soul! Burdens, intolerable for age, weighing on young years! Hope dead! Joy fled! A sigh on the lip and in the look hollow despair! Pressing on the conscience a leaden weight, and piercing it a poison-sting! Each glance on friends, yet unconscious of the coming blot, a keen anguish. Tears on the pillow! Sleepless nights and torturing days, and the dull dread of worse miseries! Clouds over the whole horizon of the spirit, and all this agony succeeding a brilliant dream of pleasure, where every pulse was joy, every breath an exhilaration, every sensation a thrill of delight, and every vision bright with the morning hues of hope and health.

What a change in Belle Standfast! Care on her brow, her face thin, her cheek pale, her limbs relaxed,

and out of her voice that tone which fell on the ear with pleasure, and brought a smile to the lip, and light into the eye, and shed a magnetic joy over every circle in which she moved. Her family wonder, and her friends fear, and her enemies shake their heads with a malignancy of suspicion.

Belle had an engagement with Walter Sparker for one more gay night at the opera, in New York. But there was no bright anticipation of pleasure. She rushed in the splendid car, rather as a garlanded victim was taken to the ancient altar. Suddenly, the paint had disappeared from the faces of the performers, who stalked like the phantoms of a troubled dream. The most exquisite music had a mocking sound, and the very lights burned with a hideous and blinding glare: Walter Sparker, in the midst of the scene, seemed the genius of ruin who had wrought the terrific metamorphosis.

As the train went thundering forward over the rails, Belle felt her lips sealed. There was a benumbing coldness in her heart, although her face was red and flushed. She could not lift her eyes. Even with the color in her cheek, she looked like a beautiful corpse.

Walter Sparker took from his pocket a small case, richly ornamented, and, opening it, held before her eyes a locket, sparkling with gems. Even gold and brilliants flashed in vain. She felt that it would have been as suitable to dangle them over a grave.

"Here, Belle," said Walter, gaily, "is a present. Isn't it a beauty?"

Pearl and diamond glittering in the light awoke no response. At last, she exclaimed, slowly, and with painful effort:

"Take it away, Walter! I don't want it."

"Don't want it!" he said, with surprise. "What do you mean? You must be somebody else."

"I *am* somebody else, Walter," she replied, with an infinite sadness in her tone. "*You* have made me somebody else. Belle Standfast is no more. That locket burns my eyes. Put it away!" she added, passionately, "put it away!"

"But, Belle," he said, with great tenderness in his persuasive tone, "let me hang it around your neck! Wear it for my sake!"

He placed the bright bauble about her neck, and kissed her, and played with her ringlets, and she submitted as a lamb to the flower-wreath that decks it for its death. Perceiving her suffering, he inquired, with alarm:

"Belle, what ails you? Your lips are cold as ice, and your cheek as pale as death."

"I am worse than dead, Walter," she answered, with a torrent of hot tears. "I wish I could die. I long to be in my grave. I feel like a living corpse that ought to be buried out of sight. I am ruined—father, mother, all are ruined—ruined, Walter, ruined."

As she concluded these words, she wrung her hands in agony, and fell back on the seat as if the life had really gone out of her body.

Walter Sparker now began to realize the anguish

he had caused. The first dark shadow from the future had fallen around him. A thorn suddenly started from his bed of roses to pierce quivering into his flesh. Out from the light and music of his dream of joy was this voice of woe! He ran for water; he moistened the lips of the girl, he bathed her temples, he whispered words of love and encouragement, and as these fell on her ear, a languid smile began to play over her features, and hope to spring anew in her breast. She looked at him long, in silence, and, at last, said faintly, and with a tone of mild reproof:

“Walter, you never promised. I took all for granted. Save me!” she burst out, with the beseeching of despair. “Save me, Walter; save me! Save my father! Save my mother! Save us all from disgrace worse than death!”

The man was moved in his inmost soul. All that was best in him was touched by this pleading girl. His lips were preparing to make the irrevocable vow. Oh, Heaven, that such a resolution should be suffered to yield before a temptation suddenly presented; that human frailty should be so beset with fatal snares, that even a virtuous endeavor in a feeble soul should be stifled by the breath of blasting evil!

At the instant when the binding word would have been spoken, Walter Sparker, turning his face, saw Edward Stewart looking through the window in the car-door. The eye of his foe waked in him all that was bad. A sudden revulsion passed over him. His good resolution died out of his heart, and his promise

faltered on his lips. He replied, with a careless, defiant air :

"Belle, I'll think about it. I am going away for about two weeks, and when I come back, I'll give you my answer."

She sprang at him with passionate energy, and struck him in the face a stinging blow.

"You don't mean it, Walter Sparker ! You can't mean it ! Are you a villain ? Have you intended my ruin ? The mask is falling off. I see into your heart. You have taken the honey from the flower, and now do you fling it down and trample it under your feet ?' Oh, God, how I have been deceived, deluded, destroyed ! Take care, or you will wake murder in me. A bullet will fly to your heart, or to mine, or to both. If you do not promise, blood will flow, and death will be in your crime."

Walter was frightened at the outburst. He never dreamed that such a tempest could be evoked from so frail and joyous a creature. In his surprise and alarm, he changed his manner, and, by persuasive looks and tones, succeeded in calming the storm he had excited, so that Belle, inspired by hope, witnessed the opera almost with her usual interest, and returned to her home in part relieved of her oppressive fear.

Edward Stewart had come from the city in the same train with Walter and Belle. After retiring, he felt on his heart an inexpressible weight. A nervous dread spread a cloud over his soul. He tossed as in a fever during long and weary hours, and often rose

and gazed from the window. The cold moon mocked him, the stars glittered serenely over his distress, the summer air seemed stifling, and the midnight hush of nature grew insupportable. In the morning he walked forth with the dawn to calm his soul in the breath of the dewy air and the beams of the young sun. The very joy of the earth and the sky was saddening. As he wandered near General Sparker's house, Walter came out with his satchel in his hand, evidently prepared for a journey, and, absorbed in his thoughts, encountered Edward on a narrow path in a clump of trees, while pressing hurriedly to the station. The two men were startled as they thus unexpectedly confronted each other. Walter flushed crimson with his anger, and flinging his satchel on the ground, said, in a low, fierce voice,

"Stewart, you are a spy."

"What do you mean, Mr. Sparker?" inquired Edward, in astonishment.

"Mean! I mean what I say!" cried Walter. "I curse you and brand you as a contemptible spy!"

"Have a care, sir!" said Edward, excitedly. "I will not bear much more. For your father's sake, I will endure this, but you must not repeat those words. I say you *must* not."

"For my father's sake!" said Walter, kindling into increased rage. "Have you not alienated my father from me? Are you not closeted with him every day? Have you not tricked me out of his heart? Am I not almost banished from my home by your disgusting

presence? I hate you! I dare you! I curse you! You are a spy!"

"Mr. Sparker," replied Edward, with an indignation almost beyond his control, "I never sought your father. He always sends for me. I have used no mean arts to gain his esteem, and you know it. I will bear these insults as long as I can, but you must beware! There is a limit beyond which my manhood will not suffer you to pass."

"Your manhood, Stewart!" answered Walter, tauntingly. "Your manhood, indeed! You are a coward as well as a spy. Did you not peep into the window of my car last night, and see what you had no right to? Answer me that?"

"I was late, ran for the train, and in my haste mistook the car, and tried to get in yours," said Edward, with attempted calmness. "I saw you hang a necklace around Miss Standfast's neck and kiss her, and was sorry for the sight."

"I said, Stewart," cried Walter, "that you were a spy and a coward, and now I add that you are a liar."

Edward shook with anger. His black eye shot fire. Again and again he lifted his arm and brought it to his side. At last, with a powerful exertion, he was able to say:

"Mr. Sparker, I want no trouble. I will bid you good morning. You have my explanation, if you choose, my apology. With that you must be satisfied."

"You cannot escape in this way!" shrieked Walter,

flinging himself before Edward as he began to move forward, and pulling his nose, and striking a staggering blow. Stewart instantly recovered himself, and running against his antagonist, hit him in the forehead with all the concentrated energy of his young manhood, aroused at last into frantic fury.

Walter Sparker fell to the ground with a quivering and convulsed motion of the limbs, while the blood poured forth in red streams from his lips and temple. His face soon had the pallor of a corpse. He ceased to breathe, and seemed to be dead. Edward knelt beside him in agony, placed his cheek to his lips, felt his pulse, and then ran to a spring, and filling his hat with water, sprinkled the face of the apparently lifeless man. Had he killed the son of his friend? Was human blood to be a spot on his life? Would he be to himself an eternal reproach and an exile from his home and country? All rushed before him in a picture of flame, like the glare of a hideous vision. When stooping his head he heard a faint whisper:

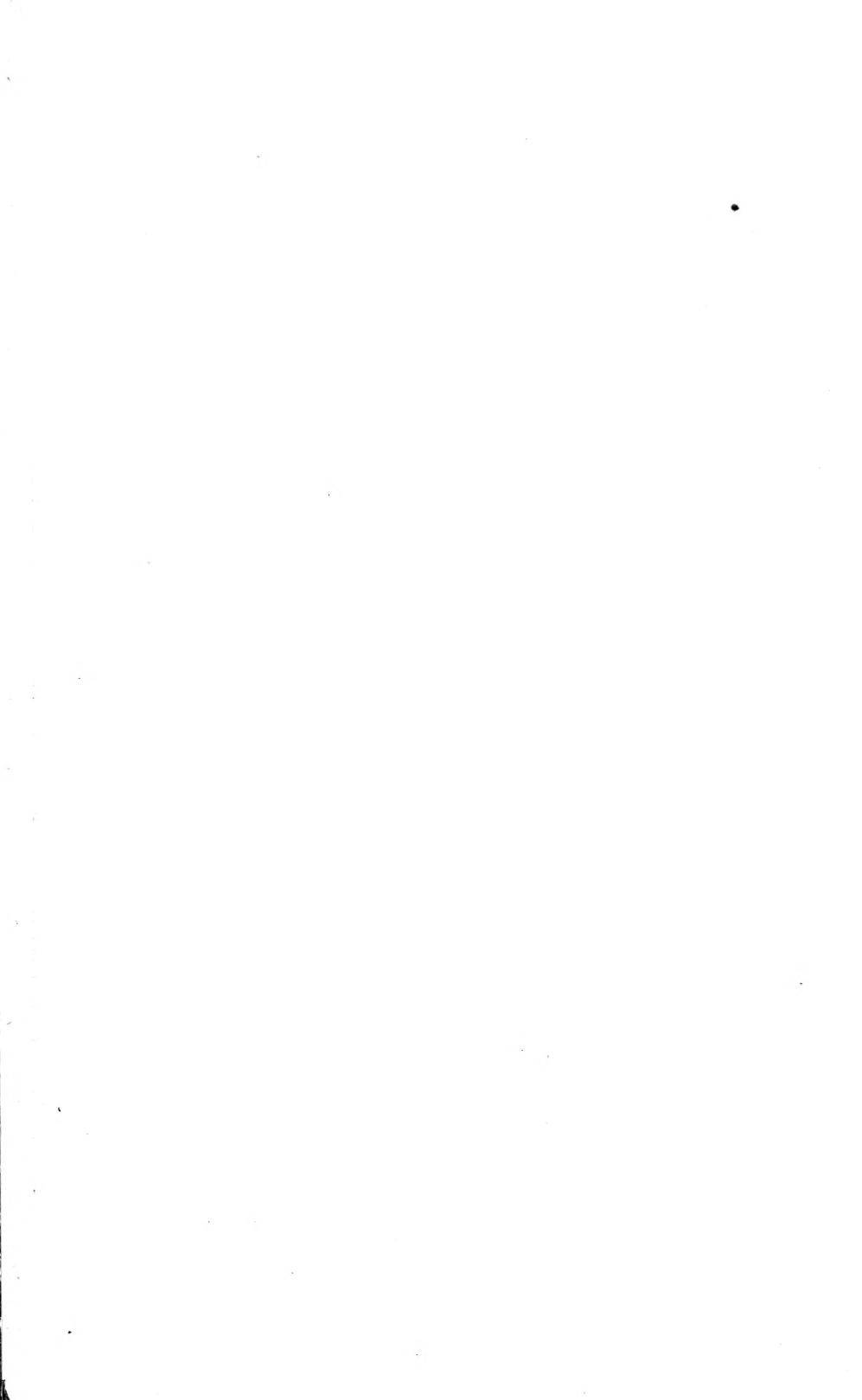
“Take me home. Say I fell. Send for a doctor.”

It was enough. Walter lived. It was for Stewart now to preserve the vital spark, and save from ruin an everlasting spirit. He threw his arms around the prostrate body, lifted it as if it were weightless, bore it through the wood, carried it over the field, along the road, over the lawn, across the piazza, up the stairs, and laid it gently on the bed which it had so recently left glowing with life. The servants were called, the explanation made, the physician summoned, and soon

the wound was pronounced not fatal, and Walter Sparker out of immediate danger.

During all this fierce conflict of hate and blood, involving life and death, a mocking-bird on General Sparker's piazza, had been pouring forth his wild and varied ecstasies. He chattered like a magpie, called in the pert tones of the jay, cried in the excited voice of the woodpecker, uttered the caw of the crow, and pealed the clarion of the cock, mimicked the hoarse and screeching sounds of his gaudy neighbors the parrot and the peacock, then exceeded the music of the lark, and rivalled the passion of the nightingale, running through all the gamut of fun and joy and woe, and flooding the air with sounds profuse as the beams of the life-inspiring sun, as if to deride the strifes and sufferings of his superior mortals, and to relieve his own panting breast of nerve and flame in his tuneful efforts.



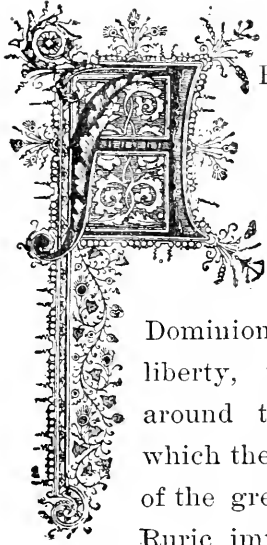




“We have health, comfort and a good conscience.”
Page 315.

CHAPTER XL.

THE SUNNY SOUTH.



FFTER the singular conclusion of the Naval Academy Hop, Tojo, in alarm, had hurried Tip and Lil by rail into the valley of Virginia, and in a few weeks they wandered to the extremity of the Old Dominion. What a contrast between their liberty, with the fresh breath of nature around them, and the sights and sounds to which they had been accustomed amid the dens of the great Metropolis! Their distance from Ruric imparted a secret joy. By their contact with varied things and persons, their intelligence had been quickened, and more especially by the instructions of Mr. Rylance and their observations in Annapolis. Each thing of earth and sky was an object of wonder. Life was one succession of surprises. Now a flower, now a field, a bird, a snake, a cloud, a mountain, would awake their exclamations. Everywhere was the spell of a new beauty. The little pocket Bible, and the book of songs were read in a new light, and had become not only companions but instructors. The children played, sang, performed

before farm houses, in towns and in villages, and always excited a strange interest in the people. Their earnings were by no means contemptible, and what exceeded their moderate wants was faithfully transmitted to Ruric, whose mystic power pursued them in all their wanderings. They slept sometimes on a lawn, again in a wood, or a field, on the bare earth and beneath the broad sky, and in the towns could always find a suitable accommodation. Their lives thus composed a poem. In an age of iron and lightning, amid the excesses of our civilization, here was the nearest approach possible to the nomadic habits of a primitive people. Song, harp and guitar, completed the picture.

The children, one morning, were pillowed on the roots of a patriarchal oak, whose vast circumference of leaves afforded a royal shelter. In the distance stood the Blue Mountains, whose hazy summits formed a line on the sky, unbroken by a single visible depression. Between, was a wide, undulating plain, covered with farms and villages, with here and there a spire lifted into view, while the green of meadows and the yellow of grain-fields gave the charm of contrast. Toward the left, the receding summits, frowning with opposite rocks, showed a stream had forced a cleft through its mountain-barriers that it might wind fertilizing through the meadows. On the right, two beautiful rivers mingled fraternally their sparkling waters, and were traceable by long lines of white mists brightening in the sun. Indeed, over the entire landscape was spread a thin haze, which, like the veil

of a bride, heightened the loveliness it partially concealed.

As the wanderers took their simple morning meal by the side of a clear spring, bubbling out from the roots of an oak, a squirrel ran out on the branch of a neighboring hickory, and sat with a nut between its fore-paws, and its tail curled gracefully over its back. When the chippings of the nut began to rain down on the leaves, Lil cried, in an ecstasy, pointing to the gay and frolicsome creature :

“Tip, see, see! What a beauty! How smooth his gray coat! How lovely his tail! How much prettier than the poor prisoner who turned his cage in our den like a little slave! He’s full of joy, just because he’s free, like you and I are now.”

“Not so free as you think,” said Tip. “I tell you, we’re pretty well caged, after all. We go where Ruric says, and do all the work and give him the money. We’re to meet Toj in Halidon for orders, and then we’ll know how we grind round for Ruric, like his old pet squirrel, with one eye out, a lame leg, and the hair off its back.”

“Don’t ever talk that way, Tip,” cried Lil, quite terrified. “You scare me, and you must stop. Last night I dreamed of Ruric, and thought he seized me by the hand, and shook me, and beat me with his leather lash. Whenever I think of him it makes me tremble.”

“Well, Lil,” said Tip, gently, “I’ll stop, for your sake. I mean to see Toj once more, but I won’t

stand this long. We can make our own living, and no thanks to anybody. See! that squirrel on the top of the tree! How his tail whisks about! He looks his joy, and runs and leaps, and I believe it's because he's free to work or play, and pay no taxes to his owner; and I'll be like him before long, and let old Ruric do his best. I tell you I will, and I mean it."

Lil looked gravely on the ground, but soon burst forth with childish glee.

"Here, Tip! Just see! How queer! These black ants have something white in their mouths. What can it be, and what are they doing?"

"Thunder!" exclaimed Tip, gazing curiously, "it is queer! One line of ants carries the white things, and the other goes back empty! How quick they run! I'll follow them. Here they go! I've found their nest in the hole of this old tree. I'll tell you, they're movin', like the folks in New York on the first of May."

After observing the little black toilers a few minutes, our two wanderers took their breakfast and started forward; Lil with her heavier harp, and Tip with his guitar and a small tin box containing their dresses and articles needed in some of their performances. Now they admired a rose, again plucked a violet, chased an insect, gathered wild flowers, enjoyed the scent of a clover-field, or asked for an apple or a melon to refresh them on their journey. Their music always made them friends among the simple people.

These were to be the happiest hours of their existence. Every sense was an avenue of the keenest pleasure.

About noon, as they were crossing a mountain, standing on a crag, gazing, Lil cried, suddenly :

“Tip. there’s the grandest thing yet! That must be an eagle! See him circling up the sky! Now he drops on that bird that screams and lets fall a fish! See! see! The eagle shoots like lightning, and catches the fish before it reaches the ground.”

“Well done, old fellow!” shouted Tip. “Thunder, how he fell! That’s the way Ruric gets the fish we catch in his own beak and claws. But he can’t fly like that,” added the boy, as the monarch-bird wheeled sublimely to a mountain crag, and folding his pinions, devoured the spoil taken in his bold robber-flight.

“Do you think an angel could sail more beautifully?” said Lil, sadly. “Oh, I wish I had wings, to fly above the earth, through the clouds, and be at rest somewhere! I’m so tired!” she exclaimed, bursting into tears. “I want a father and a mother. I think of them all the time. I dream of them, and it seems so lonely for a girl to be wandering over the world and to have no home.”

“Don’t cry, Lil,” said Tip, in a most soft and tender tone. “Wipe your eyes. I can’t stand your tears, no way. It is lonesome for you, but it’ll be all right some day. I’m sure it will.”

Above them, as an emblem of hope, a vast white cloud, fringed with silver and gold, seemed to fill the heavens with its ineffable glory.

As she gazed, the shadow vanished from the face of the girl, and she smiled through her tears.

"Tip," she began, after a little hesitation, "I have a secret. You'll keep it, won't you? Nobody knows it but me, and it seems as if I must tell you."

"Thunder!" cried Tip, with an eager emphasis of earnestness, "you know I never blab."

The girl paused, pressed her bosom as if to feel something concealed by her dress, and then lifted out from her collar a locket secured by a small gold chain.

"There's something," she said, "you never saw before. I've worn it for years, unknown to Ruric, or he'd have taken it and beat me to death."

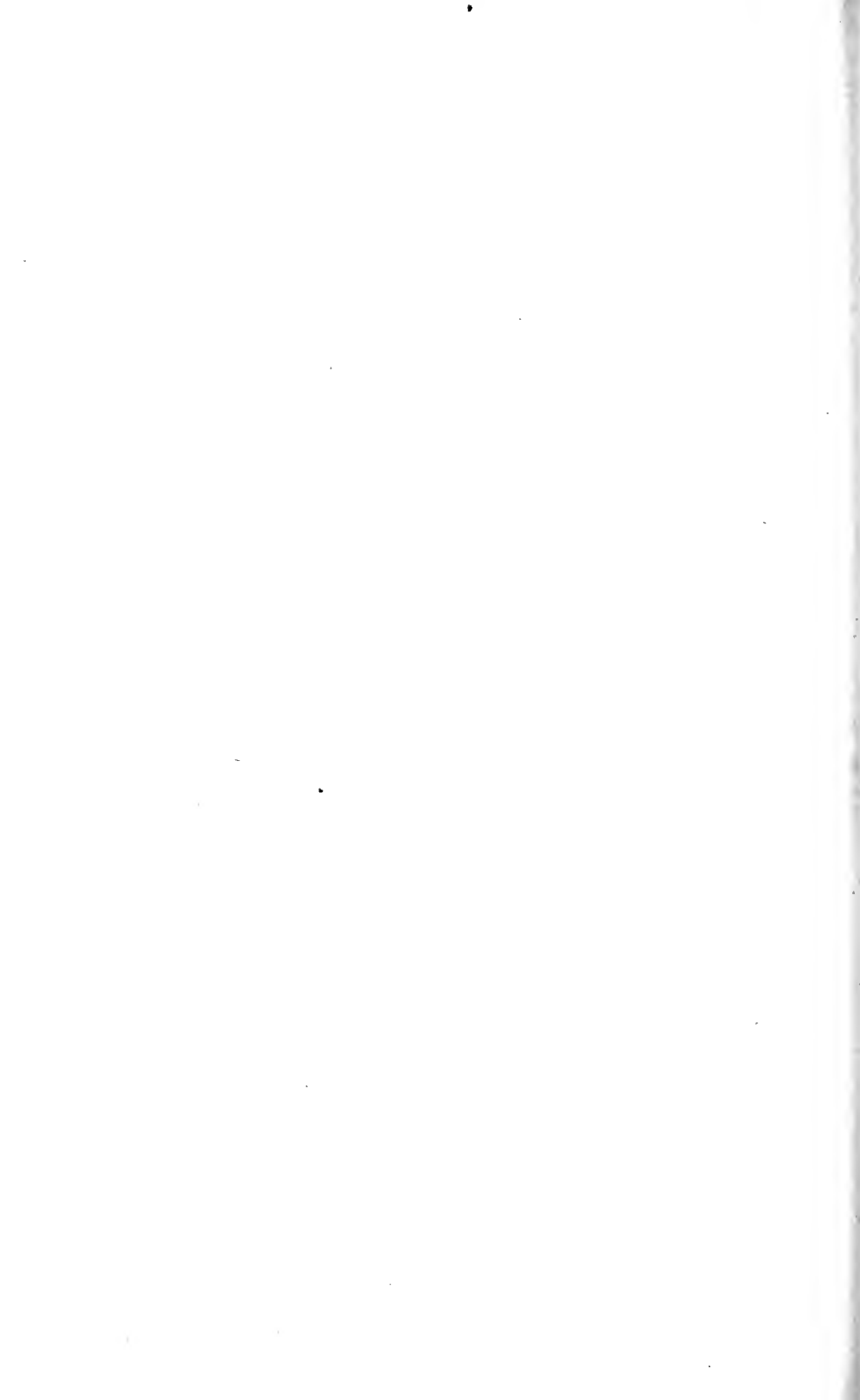
"What a beauty!" cried Tip, taking the locket and gazing on it with admiration. "That's pure gold! the sparklers are diamonds, I'm sure! and their gems green and white! A gentleman and a lady! Handsome as a king and queen! Lil, you are like her, as one rose is like another."

"And see, Tip, what's written here," Lil exclaimed, with a species of mysterious wonder; "but its some language I can't understand."

"Now, its my turn," said Tip, with a sly laugh. "Look here! this is queer as yours, and about as pretty, and as valuable. You can't have all the secrets, Lil, nor the beautiful things either."

The boy now took from its concealment a locket, even more rich and brilliant than that of Lil. It gleamed in the southern sun with an oriental splendor, and flashed around its bright glancing rays from jewels most costly





and magnificent. A princely face, a turbaned head, a long, flowing beard, eyes large, black and glittering, a kingly air of command, with characters in a strange language, might well impress the children with a feeling of mysterious wonder rising into awe. They gazed and gazed in long silence. Thoughts too deep for words arose in their young souls. Whose were these faces? Whence came the lockets? What was their own past, and what would be their future? The fountain of their being! In what land did it first flow! Father! Mother! A cloud over all! Around, impenetrable mystery! The children descended the mountain without an utterance. Suddenly, as they passed a field, the spell was broken by a bound of youthful impulse. Just before them, on a yellow bloom, was a magnificent scarlet butterfly, edged with black and spotted with green, blue and purple. It flew over the fence. Lil started in full chase and Tip clapped his hands, laughing, as she ran. Now the splendid creature would alight on a clover-blossom, and then sail away on its bright wings, while the girl again and again snatched at it and missed it, until at last it flew aloft and vanished in the air, like some mocking human hope, whose gay colors provoke pursuit only to end in cheating disappointment.

Tired with the chase, Lil was glad to recline with Tip under the ample shadow of an ancient beech. Here they slept until toward evening, when the former, starting up from her dreams, exclaimed :

“What’s that? I never heard such a song. Tip, get

up! I want you to hear what beats our Central Park bird out of its feathers."

The boy awoke and listened, and then exclaimed, almost in an ecstasy:

"The North's nothing to that Southern warbler, I tell you. Never heard anything like it. It's free! that's the reason, and our birds up North are caged. Hurrah for liberty!"

"Is it all the same bird," cried Lil, "that makes these notes?"

"I *guess* it be, as the Yankees say, or I *reckon* it is, as they say about here. That's like the screech-owl we heard last night."

"That's the lark we heard this morning."

"And there's a jay!"

"By thunder, a robin!"

"A cock!"

"A sparrow!"

"A thrush!"

"A peacock!"

"A rooster!"

"Every bird in the world," at last, exclaimed Tip, in an outburst of joy, "and the last mimicked best! That beats itself," he added, as the songster, in a supreme effort, poured forth a flood of melody that seemed to thrill the earth and the air, and to kindle into flame the souls of the two listeners.

As now they sauntered along, evening lavished all her richest colors over the Southern landscape, touching everything into a glow of beauty. A giant oak

reached out its gnarled boughs, and a poplar lifted its lofty stature into air. The purple bloom of the mimosa emitted its peach-like fragrance. Above was the white of the magnolia, and below the scarlet of the cactus. Over a wall hung the flowers of a climatis, and along the limbs of a huge ailantus wound a brilliant Virginia creeper, and aloft on the very top was visible the splendor of a wisteria, while near, a vast pile of sweet-briar exhibited a luxuriance of green leaves and scented roses. As the light of evening faded, the moon arose, and soon heaven glittered over with the glory of the stars.

Tip and Lil laid themselves down for their night's sleep amid the gathering shadows of a wood. Harp and guitar were their pillows. Instead of a lamp, they had the moonbeams shimmering through the leaves. The girl, before closing her eyes, gazed upward and exclaimed:

"I know who made all these beautiful things!"

"That's more than I do," said the skeptical Tip. "I wish I did."

"Our little Bible tells me," replied Lil, "and I believe it. I can't help it. Something says to me it can't lie."

"Thunder!" replied Tip, with a sort of masculine disdain, "you're a girl, and that's a book for girls."

"I don't care, and I'm glad I am," said Lil, "if that makes me believe. My book tells me a spirit made everything, and it's so."

"Gammon," said Tip, shaking his head. "That

won't stand muster. A spirit! why it has no body, no hands, or feet, or anything you can see. It couldn't make heavy rocks and them big mountains any more than breath or wind. It couldn't be," he concluded, with a philosophic emphasis and assurance.

"But the book says so," cried the girl, earnestly, "and it must be so. And the spirit who made all became a man who died on the cross, and rose out of his grave, and went up into heaven, and is king of everything. Oh, if I couldn't believe this, I would want to kill myself," and the big tears on the young pilgrim's cheek glistened in the moonlight, and her low sobs were breathed out on the evening breeze.

"Well! Lil," answered the boy, in a tone of responsive sympathy, "I wish I could believe it, because you do. But I can't. It seems to me these things just all grow of themselves. They come and they go away again. See this little violet," he added, reaching out his hand in the light of the moon and plucking a delicate flower, "it'll die and turn to dust, and others will grow and bloom and fade and fall to the earth, and so on and on, and so will beasts and birds and fishes and men—maybe sun, moon and stars—just like the bubbles we saw on the ocean, one minute bright as rainbows and the next just nothing at all. That's my thinking."

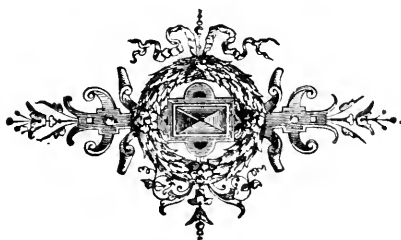
"Tip, that's too bad," said the girl, sobbing. "It's against my book, and my book is all right. Our Saviour is so good and kind and beautiful! He couldn't lie; he died and he lives; and I hope to be

with him, and that's enough. It helps me bear everything when I'm lonely, and want my father and mother, and feel just like lying down on the side of the road, never to get up again, and to be out of trouble."

As Lil concluded this childish confession of her faith in the solitary moonlit wood, she fell asleep, overcome by her weariness, but angels were awake watching over the place, and spreading their wings for her protection. Tip, too, was soon in deep slumber. How interesting the picture both to earth and Heaven!

Did the creed of the fathers reproduce itself in the children? Was it her ancestral faith that thus dawned on the soul of Lil, while over Tip grew the dark shadow of ancestral unbelief?

To the one, the First Cause was a spiritual personality, and to the other an eternal materialism. Deism and Pantheism! The roots of these are in all souls! In the one or in the other, each of us will finally seek rest. Deepest in men, they form the great dividing line! From faith in a Personal Creator the way is easy to faith in a Personal Saviour, and through Him to belief in the Life Everlasting.



CHAPTER XII.

MARRIAGE AND MADNESS.



HE wounds of Walter Sparker had brought to Belle Standfast intense disquietude. His absence would have had a determinate limit, but his recovery may be in the far future. Should he linger for months! Should he die! What, then, will become of her? Her honor hangs on the uncertainties of his condition, and her hope fluctuates with the flying reports. Joy and fear alternate in her soul like lights and shadows from the summer clouds. Her own blighted life would be buried in her betrayer's grave. Should he survive, will he prevent her disgrace by an honorable marriage? Her hope was thus bound up in him, and her heart rose and fell with every passing breath. When, at last, his recovery became assured, she felt that she had left her one more golden opportunity. That gone, and she was lost. Subdued by suffering, and, under his father's roof and influence, if ever, Walter Sparker would now do what was right, and save his victim from the dishonor she dreaded—dishonor, compared

with which, death was nothing. But let the auspicious moment pass! Let the man plunge into his old pleasures, and, more than all, be again under the shadow of Bidman, and he would become harder than ever, and she be left to her fate.

She perceived, with a woman's instinct, that only General Sparker and Edward Stewart could aid her in her dark distress, and after many tears and struggles, to the latter she concluded to address a note.

When, in answer to her request, Edward reached the house, he found Belle in a room with the curtains drawn and the doors closed, so that the gloom of the apartment corresponded to the sorrow of her heart. The salutations of the day having been exchanged, she said, in a low, sad voice :

"Do you remember, Mr. Stewart, that in this place you promised to be my friend?"

"I recollect our conversation well," replied Edward promptly and cheerfully. "Nor have I forgotten my pledge. I engaged to be to you more than a friend—I was to be a brother."

"Thank you, Mr. Stewart, thank you, from my heart," she said, with tears. "Your face and tone assure me that you will redeem your word. Alas, alas, neither you nor I could then know what was involved in that promise. I never thought I could ask you to do what I want now." Wringing her hands, she added : "But my misery is intolerable, and you are my only hope."

"Miss Standfast," he answered, with a kind and

sympathetic look, "my promise had no limit, and my performance shall equal it. Whatever the nature of your difficulties, my hand, my heart and my head are all ready to help you. Speak to me freely, and consider me at your disposal."

"Oh, you are indeed true and kind," she exclaimed, with a heaving bosom. "I know that I can trust you. But how, oh, how can I explain to you what I wish! It is terrible, too terrible!"

"Do not speak and feel thus, Miss Standfast," he said, with deep emotion. "Remember that I am your brother—your only brother."

"How can I tell you, Mr. Stewart," she exclaimed, with faster-flowing tears, "tell you, in this place, where you offered me your noble, manly heart, that your rival, whom I preferred, has been my destroyer? Only marriage with a man who has been my ruin, and whom I can never love, never respect, never trust, can save me and my family from a blot darker, deeper, more dreadful, than any other that can stain a woman!"

As she uttered these words, she sank down on the sofa, pale and helpless, and it seemed that the agony of the moment had exhausted the springs of her life.

"Miss Standfast," began Edward, as soon as she revived, "what is done, is done; we cannot change it. Tears cannot obliterate stern facts. Let us accept the situation just as it is, and tell me precisely what you desire."

These words strengthened her, and, smiling sadly

into his manly face, and still reclining on the pillow of the sofa, she said :

“Mr. Stewart, I have no faith in Walter Sparker. He is naturally weak and fickle, and under the influence of Dr. Bidman he becomes far worse than he is by nature. I have no hope but in his father, and with his father you alone can plead my cause.” She could say no more, choked by emotion.

Edward answered immediately. “I perceive all at a glance, Miss Standfast. You need not add another word. I will speak to General Sparker, and do all in my power to make Walter see and feel his duty. You are right in saying that Bidman is most to be dreaded. He is the evil genius of Sparker, and darkens round his victim with a shadow black as hell. But we will try to defeat his villainies. I acknowledge the cloud is thick and dark, but I can see light glimmering through it; the edges are already fringed and all will soon be once more bright.”

The girl sprang to her feet. Hope once more dawned in her heart. She seized the hand of her friend, and poured forth such words of gratitude as it would be impossible to record.

Edward Stewart proceeded at once to the house of General Sparker, who appeared to be in deep grief. He was bent and worn with some sorrow which had pierced his heart, and the change in him was painful. The snows and storms of his advanced years had suddenly left on him the white and blight of winter. Stewart was awed and embarrassed before these visible tokens

of an old man's misery. After some preliminary conversation, he at last said :

"General, I am sent here on a painful subject, and hesitate to add to the troubles of your venerable age, and yet I am under an obligation I cannot escape."

"Proceed, Mr. Stewart, proceed," answered the General, with an effort that indicated the foreboding of his mind.

"I have a message to you from Miss Belle Standfast," returned Edward, looking steadily into the eye of his aged friend, who startled and trembled, while the blood flushed into his pale and haggard face. After a moment's pause, he said, slowly :

"I know all, Mr. Stewart, and I know the cause of my son's wounds."

It was Edward, now, who was surprised and embarrassed. He started and his face became crimson.

"How can this be ? I have never mentioned our struggle to a living being. I supposed, too, that Miss Standfast's condition was a profound secret."

"I am sure there was no betrayal on your part, Mr. Stewart," said the General, kindly. "My knowledge came from Walter himself."

"For this I am indeed thankful," replied Edward. "It encourages me to believe he will do right and repair the injuries to Miss Standfast."

"Alas !" answered the General. "My information was not from the conscience of my son, but from his fever. When his mind was in a delirium I entered his room, and, when his eyes were closed, and he was

evidently asleep, perhaps dreaming, I heard him relate in the most vivid words what transpired in the car with Miss Standfast—your look through the window, and the fight next morning. I soon saw the real state of the case, and came to the conclusion that you were not at all to blame.”

“I assure you, General,” said Edward, earnestly, “nothing but a blow, indeed an assault on my life, could have induced me to strike your son. I have never felt anything so intensely, and until his recovery was assured I thought madness would be my doom. There is no man on earth I so love and respect as yourself, and the blood of Walter on my life would have been more than I could bear.”

The General extended his hand, and said: “I know, Mr. Stewart, that what you say is true. All is understood and settled between us. What relates to Miss Standfast is, indeed, painful. It is the most terrible blow of my life, and has nearly crushed my heart. There was but one honorable course, and that I have compelled Walter to pursue. He has made promise of marriage, the day is fixed, and even the hour and the place. This afternoon he is to see Belle in his room. I hope that this will be satisfactory to all parties. I myself will be present at the Church.”

Edward arose, his face glowing with joy, and shook the General's hand, exclaiming:

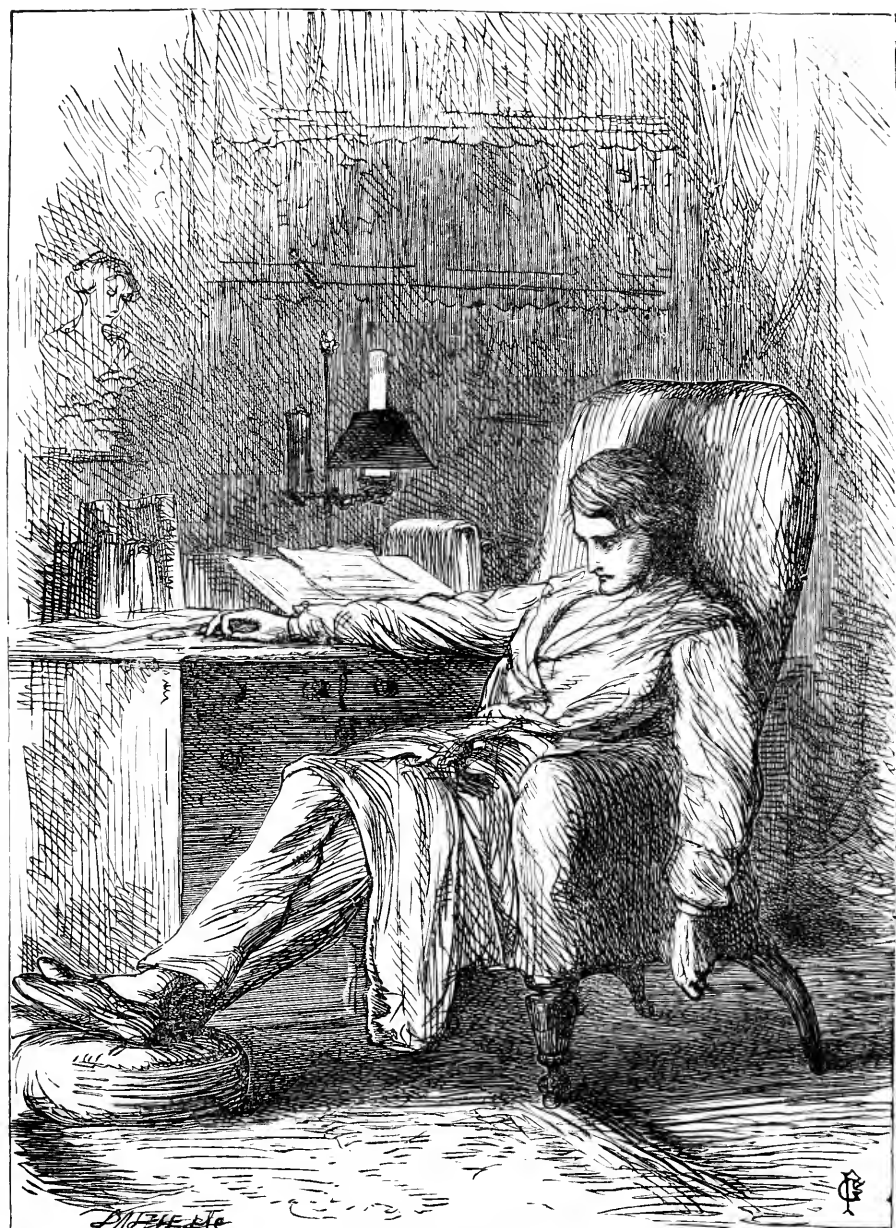
“I knew you would do this. It is like yourself. What a ruin you have lifted from a young and wretched heart. From what a blot you have saved a

worthy family! God Almighty will bless you for this act of justice."

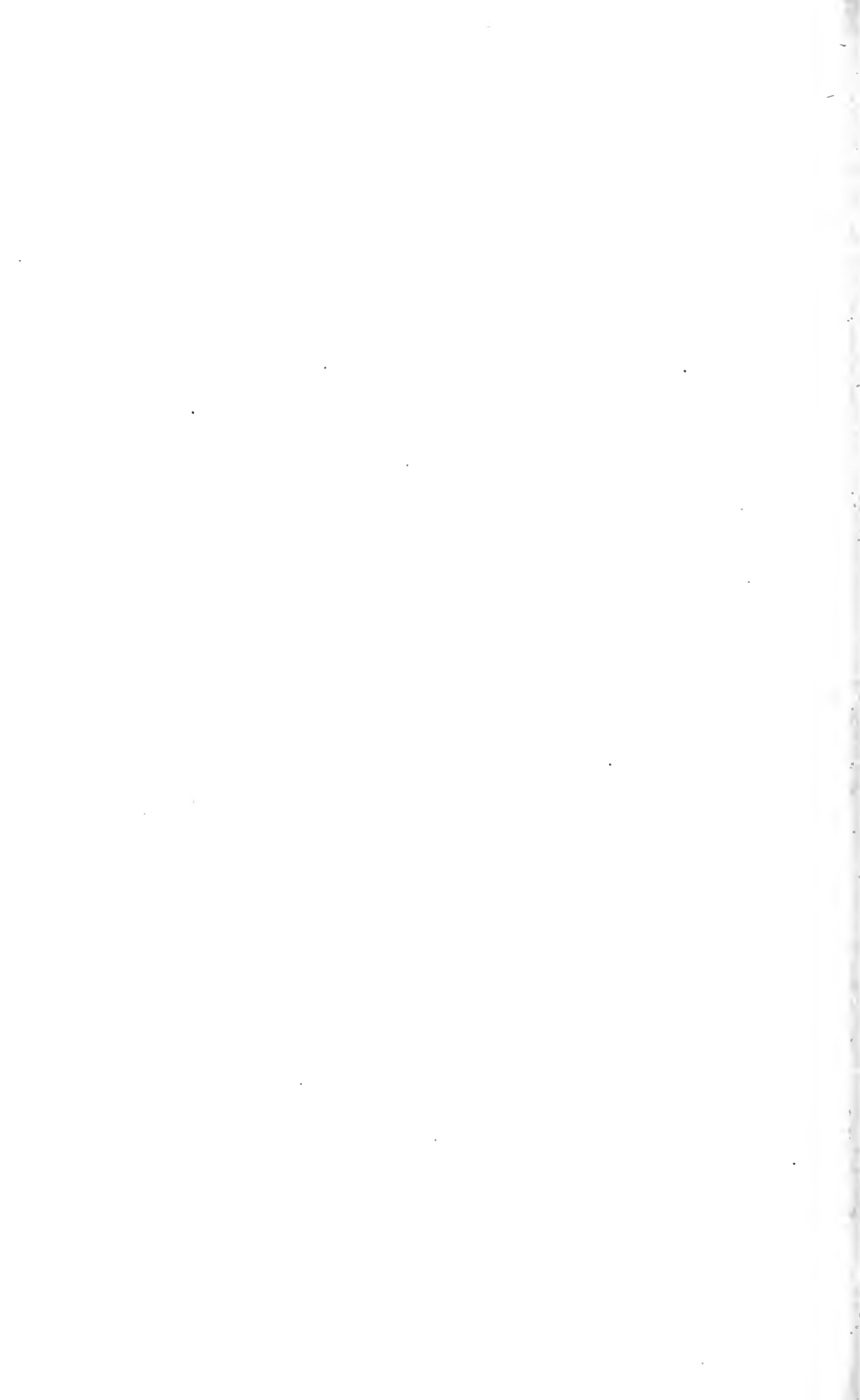
Nothing could exceed the thrill in the soul of Belle Standfast when she heard from the lips of Edward what had been required by General Sparker, and promised by Walter. Her tears flowed in gratitude to Heaven that afternoon in the chamber of her affianced husband. The scene was indeed touching and sacred. Walter was in earnest, and made happy in the consciousness that he was willing at the altar to deliver his victim. Now the shadows seem dispersed from those uniting lives. The gloom of midnight was succeeded by the brightness of morning. John Standfast and his wife felt as if they had escaped from some overhanging rock about to fall on them from the height of a precipice and crush them to fragments.

Alas! for poor human hearts and hopes. Misery darkens over man. A spectre leers amid his very festivals. At the bottom of his cup of joy is always some drop of poison hid by the sparkles of the wine. Even in the bosom of the most radiant cloud is a concealed thunderbolt. What blight is on a world framed by the eternal love and wisdom! Philosophy, solve the mystery! Evil follows good, despair follows hope, grief follows joy, death follows life! On the universe a shadow everlasting, and behind all, mercy and justice on the throne together! We cannot wonder that man, unaided, maddens at the spectacle.

Did General Sparker hear Walter's ravings for good? Also Saul Bidman heard them for evil. The breast of



"Alas. for poor human hearts and hopes!"
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the one stored for his happiness the words of the sick man, and the breast of the other stored the very same words for his destruction.

That night the shadow of the spectre was in the room of his victim, and stood at the side of his bed to wake in him every bad passion and purpose. Death was in his mission, although he knew it not.

"Walter," began Bidman, with satanic art, "so Belle struck you in the car? Nice for a bride! Did she leave the marks of her sweet little fingers? She is an affectionate creature, and will make you an amiable wife."

"For Heaven's sake, stop, Saul!" cried Walter, in a helpless and beseeching tone. "Don't open that matter. It's all arranged, and I feel as if a locomotive was lifted off my breast. I've promised father, and I've promised Belle. Don't unsettle me."

"And Edward Stewart," resumed Bidman, with a sneer and a scowl, "was observing your caresses through the car window, and saw you give her a necklace and a kiss as a reward for her blow. These are good friends to drive you into a promise of marriage on your sick bed."

"Bidman," said Walter, raising himself on his elbow, and speaking in a tone of even painful supplication, "don't tempt me! You must stop this! I can't stand it. You'll drive me crazy."

"Now I see it all," continued Bidman, with the same mocking manner. "Edward Stewart brought you to terms with his fist. You yield to your enemy

when he knocks you down. Every drop of blood he brings from your flesh is a warm argument in favor of his proposition. Scars and bruises have forced you to accept his terms."

"Saul, you'll kill me," exclaimed Walter, almost distracted. "I feel the devil rising in me now. You're waking a tempest that will destroy us all. If you let hell loose out of my heart, I warn you, that you will be the first to burn in its flames."

"Your father," burst out Bidman, with a keener irony than before, "General Adam Sparker, an old man, stands beside his wounded son, takes advantage of his feebleness, and extorts from him a promise to marry a dishonored woman, and forces him to wear for life a yoke he will loathe. A charming parental affection!"

Walter sat upright in his bed. He stared round wildly, and then struck his hands together and exclaimed :

"Do you think it was fixed up, Saul? Did they play on my fears, and impose on my weakness?" Then, holding up his hands before his eyes as if to shut out the view of some horrible spectre, he added, fiercely :

"I see it all, and I'll be even with them."

"That's like yourself, Walter," said Bidman, encouragingly. "Now I know you again, old fellow. Before, it was some person else lying on that bed. You'll soon be well again, now that your old blood is in your veins, and your old courage in your heart. A pretty wife Belle would make you. Could you trust her? If

she yielded to you, she would yield to another. Would you ever feel safe? They've imposed on you, and I have come here to deliver you from a life-long bondage. It's all an infernal conspiracy, and you shan't be caught in it while Saul Bidman can save you."

"But what shall I do?" inquired Walter, with a most piteous hesitation. "It's all arranged. I have given my word to father and Belle, and I can see no way out of it."

"Do!" said Bidman, "do! Leave that to me! Let the ocean be your bride on your wedding day. Marry England, Ireland, Scotland, France, all Europe, and the rest of the world beside. Have a free time instead of wearing this cursed yoke. I'll telegraph and engage your passage on the AURORA. She leaves New York at the very hour you were to have been enslaved. When you are out on the ocean, a free man, with all this planet before you, and money enough to pay your bills, you'll thank Saul Bidman that you're not wearing a chain which would make you a treadmill slave, with Edward Stewart and all the rest of them laughing at you, while you grind for life at the side of the virtuous Belle Standfast."

Good and evil still struggled in that feeble soul. Fierce passions painted themselves on the face and writhed in the form of Walter Sparker. He tossed on his bed, under the stare of Bidman, like a demoniac. Now he is quiet. The storm is over. Pride has triumphed. The solemn pledge is under his feet. In his soul he spurns it, and tramples on it, as he ground

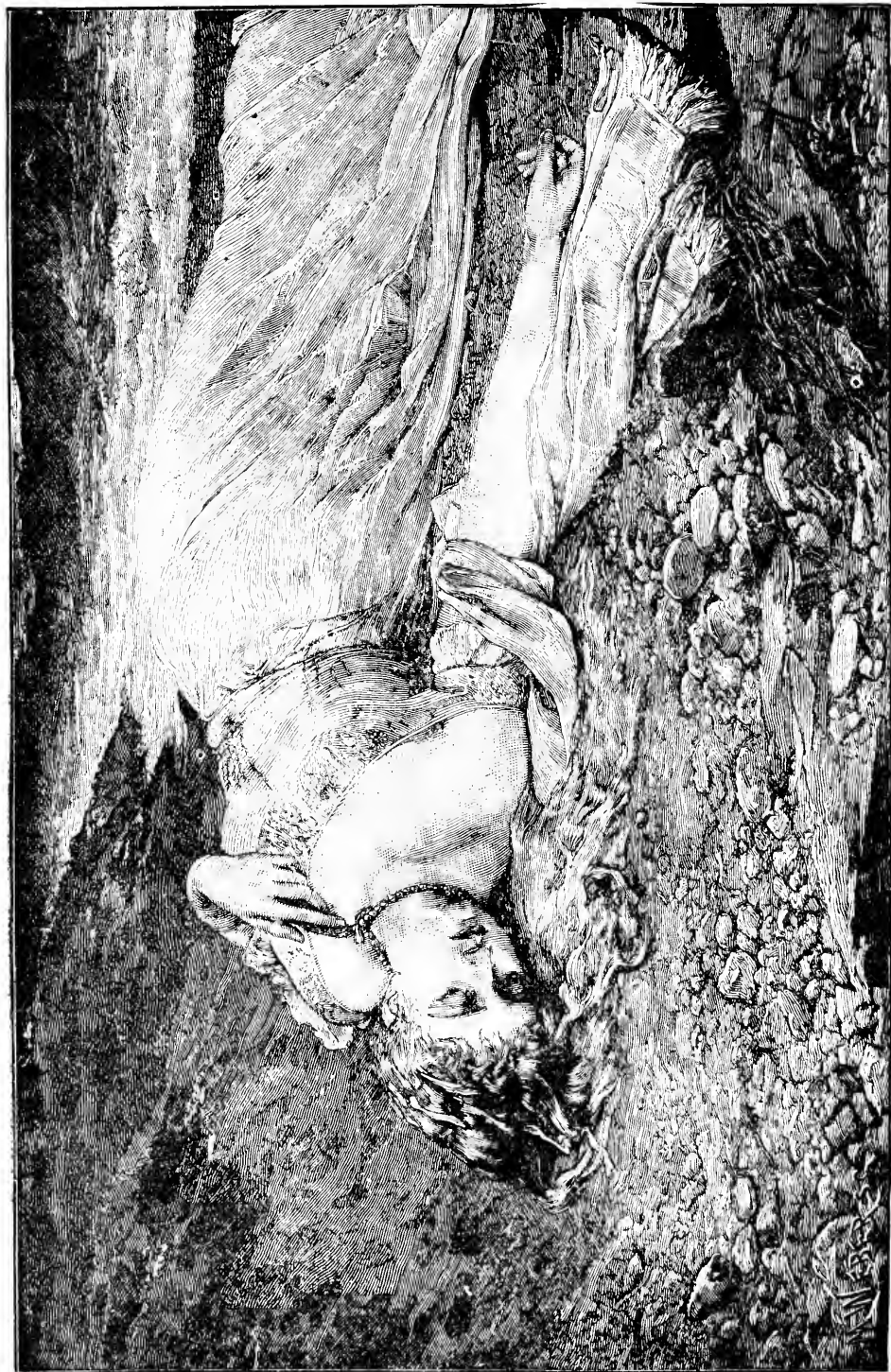
before beneath his heel the written order of his father. Indeed, the one sin had prepared the way for the other. Evil deeds are always links in a continuous chain. The fatal resolution of Walter Sparker had but flowered under the fiery heats of his passions from the seed he had been planting during years of idleness and dissipation.

Walter said, at last, calmly, to his tempter :

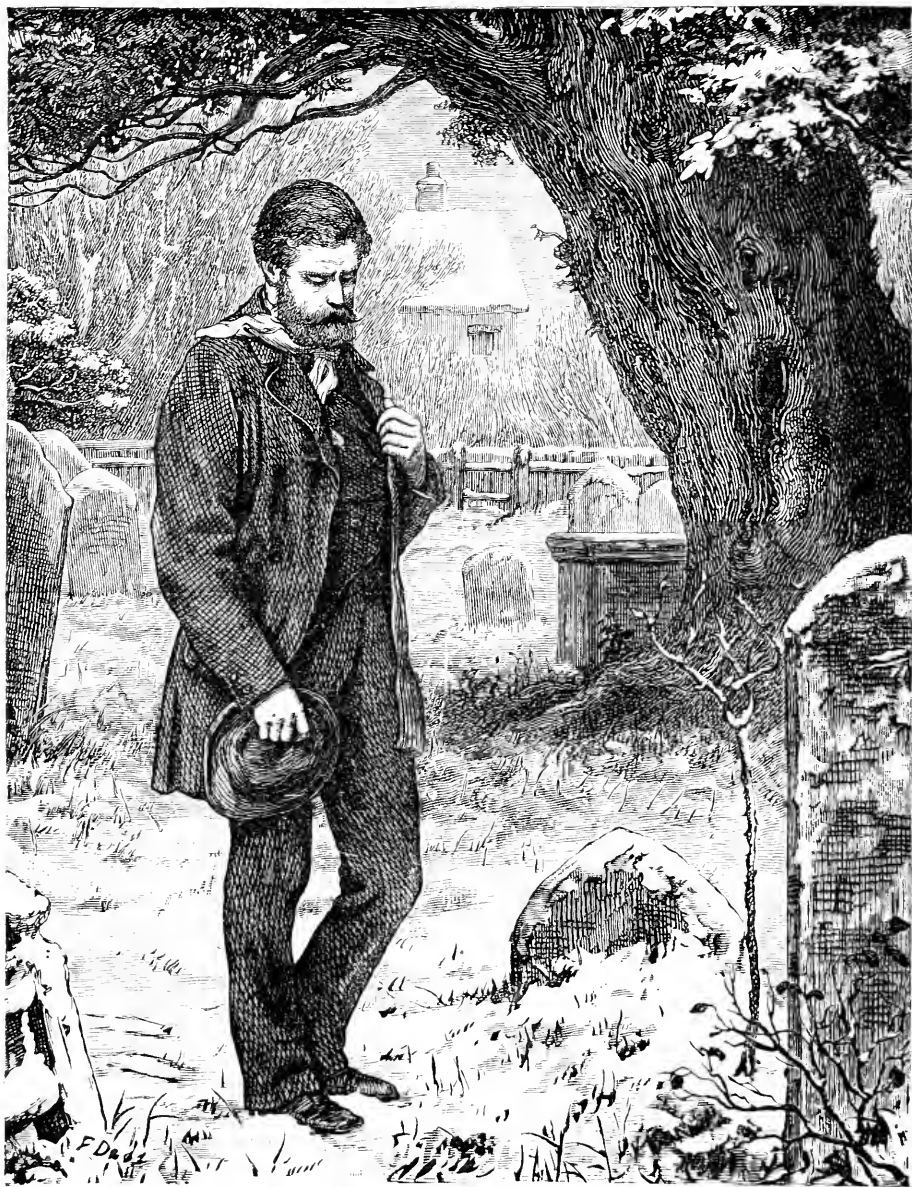
“Bidman, you always conquer, and lead me to the devil, just as you please, and I’m only too willing to follow. Telegraph, and I’ll play them a trick that will be revenge, even if it sends me to hell!”

Having uttered these words in a tone of sullen defiance, Walter Sparker turned on his side, with his face to the wall, and Bidman left his room with a leer of satanic triumph.

The day arrived. The bloom and fragrance of flowers were in the modest parish church. A smile played over everything. Music pealed its joy from the organ. Old General Sparker was in his pew. John Standfast was there to give away the bride. His wife sat near with a smirk of satisfaction. Edward Stewart and other friends were in waiting, and his stately mother appeared in matronly beauty and dignity. Crowds of villagers, including workmen and their families, were present. Belle came to the church, fragrant with orange blossoms, bright with hope—the glow on her cheek and joy in her heart, although the shadow of a terrible fear would occasionally fall over her spirit. Walter Sparker did not arrive. There was a



"In her grave of waters."



"Covered by the cold clods forever from the sun."
Page 488.

long waiting, a painful suspense, a dismal foreboding. The surpliced clergyman, with his opened book, stood at the rail of the chancel. More than once the organ, with obvious effort, strove to relieve the embarrassment. But the groom appeared not. Finally, the dreadful truth broke on the soul of Belle Standfast. She was not only betrayed, but openly insulted and irretrievably ruined. She shrieked, rushed from the church, leaped into the carriage, ordered the coachman to drive home, and reached her room—a maniac!

That night, as Edward Stewart sat at his window, he saw a white figure glide, like a ghost, beneath the glimmer of the stars, and vanish in the darkness. He started, a thrill pierced his soul, he had an intuition of a frightful fact. He rushed down the stairs, and ran under the smile of the mocking moon as she sailed out from a dark cloud. As he reached the shadow of a wood he heard a shrill cry, never to be forgotten, and then a sudden splash. Quickening his speed, he approached a little lake, the circles of whose waters were sparkling in the brilliant midnight beams, while quivering and flashing beneath the surface, the stars seemed in a wild dance of death. He plunged in, waded around for some minutes, and soon saw the white garments and upturned face of Belle Standfast. She was dead. A smile played over her features. In her grave of waters, the poor maniac had found rest from the pangs of life, and, we may trust, forgiveness from her merciful Creator. Stewart lifted the cold, wet, dripping form in his strong arms, bore her

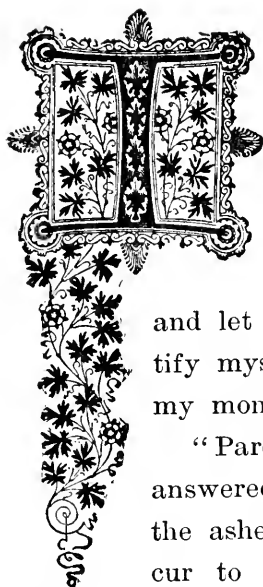
to her father's house, and laid her on her bed, yet warm with the heat of her body.

The frantic grief in that home we may not attempt to tell. That arrow which killed the daughter pierced the mother's heart, inflicting a fatal wound, and left in the soul of the silent father a pang, which can only be assuaged in his grave. A few days after the sad events we have just related, in the place where had begun the marriage joy, and where Belle should have stood a happy wife, she was seen in her coffin, the bride of death, and, amid the sad strains of the funeral dirge, was carried out of the church, to be laid in the earth, and covered by the cold clods forever from the sun.



CHAPTER XIII.

THE LITTLE WANDERERS ILL.



FEAR, after all, that I may be chasing a phantom," said Mr. Petrovich to Nicolai, as they sat smoking together in their parlor in Washington. "My heart seems leading my head. When I pause and let reason control fancy, I cannot justify myself in thus expending my time and my money."

"Pardon me for differing from you," answered Nicolai, very deliberately knocking the ashes from his cigar. "Many facts concur to prove that Lillie is the person you seek. Ruric, himself, admitted it."

"And at first," replied Mr. Petrovich, "that, of itself, appeared to settle the question. But he may have assumed to acquiesce in what he saw we believed, merely to inflict on me the keenest torment. He has succeeded too. Whoever Lillie may be, I have been tortured with the dread of his lustful vengeance, fearing even the possibility of ruin to one who may be bound to me by a tie so sacred."

"Had you seen, as I did," answered Nicolai, agitated

by the recollection, "his eye and face, and heard his terrible words of revenge, the impression would have been overwhelming. Since that moment, my suspicion has risen into certainty."

"You must, however, remember," said Mr. Petrovich, smiling, "that you have not so much involved as I. With me, it is not a mere matter of the heart. Sentiment will not avail before the tribunals. I must have judicial proof before the child can be restored to her home, her estate and her title, and, so far, you must admit that nothing approaches the necessary legal evidence."

"True! I grant it," replied Nicolai, disturbed by the shadow of a doubt. "But, on the other hand, we must remember that beside our present pursuit we have no trace whatever. Lillie is our sole clew. Abandon her and we abandon all. If we stop, we are in darkness. My advice is to press onward in the path that we have chosen. Light will soon come. I will stand by you and go with you to the end. Let me implore you not to pause or falter now. The night has been long and wearisome, but I am persuaded that the dawn is near."

"I am moved, I fear," said Mr. Petrovich, "more by your earnestness than your argument. Still, the last consideration you urged determines. We have really no other way and no other hope, and we must wait here until the time comes to go forward. Besides, I have a command from his Majesty to observe the country, make notes, and report to him, and I know

no more effectual way to study the people and their government than in our Quixotic search."

After this conversation the gentlemen threw away their cigars, drew on their gloves, took their hats and canes, and sauntered forth to the square opposite the Presidential mansion. Occasionally walking, oftener seated, they continued talking most earnestly, and, for the moment, oblivious of the great work to which they had just before consecrated anew their energies.

Mr. Petrovich, standing in front of the White House, and pointing to it with his cane, exclaimed:

"What a shocking place for the residence of the Sovereign of a great people! Surely neither beauty nor comfort were consulted in the plan. See those pillars, lean as Uncle Sam in Harper! Yesterday, when I pulled the bell, the fastening of the handle came loose from the wall! Nor is the interior better than the exterior! What horrid minglings of colors in the shabby old Green Room! Compare the bare, dingy, unsightly East Room with any corresponding apartment in the Winter Palace!"

"Of course, it is all absurd," answered Nicolai, with a slight appearance of mortification. "I can defend much in the young Republic, but the White House is quite too hard for me."

"Moreover," said Mr. Petrovich, gratified with his triumph, "it seems to me to have been placed near yon malarious marshes just to make the Constitution more democratic, by shortening the term of the Executive, and rendering frequent elections necessary. An

American fever is nearly as certain and as fatal to these republican monarchs as European dynamite to our kings and emperors."

"Bad enough, I admit," replied Nicolai, "but the evil will be cured by a single sacrifice, while our Nihilists demand many victims. When *one* President dies of marsh-disease, Congress, if he has been popular, will become magnanimous, and build a suitable mansion in an eligible locality."

"But," interposed Mr. Petrovich, cynically, "the style of the house is no worse than the style of the occupants, and that cannot be cured without the death of many generations. Vulgaritas is in the blood of republics. Yesterday I saw, in that Executive mansion, a servant in his shirt-sleeves. Coatless democracy! More abominable yet, on the day before, I saw a lad on the avenue stop the Presidential carriage, and deliver a telegram to the mistress of the nation. I cannot but contrast the manners of this White House with the elegance of our Winter Palace."

"I cannot assert," replied Nicolai, hesitatingly, "that a republic promotes refinement among the higher ranks of society. Here a monarchy has the superiority. A Court is a model for an empire. But, on the other hand, nowhere in the world are the middle and laboring classes so polite and obliging as in this country, while everywhere there is that chivalric gallantry toward woman which is a pledge of universal refinement in the future. With all the boasted courtesy of France, the working people of Paris are often insulting and

disgusting in their behavior toward those they envy as superiors."

"Yes! Since the Republic," dryly observed Mr. Petrovich. "Look at the *three* democratic rulers of the French Republic, in their *three* old palaces, and compare their style with the imperialistic splendor of the Tuileries when there was a *single* sovereign!"

"The obstacles to refinement of manners," said Nicolai, earnestly, in reply, "are here temporary. Besides, I know old families in this country as lovely and as charming as any I have seen in Europe."

"You say *old* families," replied Mr. Petrovich; "that is, those who have inherited their tastes and manners from the monarchical times of the colonies. I tell you, refinement here is impossible, in the present constitution of society. See these members of Congress! Many come from the lowest places in life. How rough and uncouth in their ways! Yet their position must be recognized, and they leave their impress everywhere. Other things, to my imperialistic feelings, are shocking. Why, at the President's Saturday reception, I saw three thick-lipped negresses grinning next to the wife and daughters of the Secretary of State. The mistress of the mansion, to ensure her popularity at her reception, passes among her guests, vulgarly introducing them, instead of waiting in her place for a dignified presentation. This republican mixture is my abhorrence. *Odi profanum vulgus!* Reverence is impossible in the people without magnificence in the sovereign."

"Pardon my boldness, Mr. Petrovich, and do not remember my offense when I return to the court of the Czar," exclaimed Nicolai. "I must again defend the Republic. Among the people, I have usually found the greatest kindness and even courtesy. The President, indeed, cannot forget that he has been elevated by the votes of the humblest citizens, and he must, therefore, give access to the lowly, even if they may be black. But, in return, how safe his person! He requires no guard against nihilistic assassins. No need for him to hide amid the cold magnificence of a royal palace! In this, what noble dignity! Peril and seclusion are now the price of the pomp and glory of monarchy. There goes the President! He is walking in the dress of a citizen. Yet, he is sovereign of one of the greatest nations of the world. To me, in this republican simplicity, there is something more impressive and sublime than in all the splendors of kingly majesty."

Mr. Petrovich was displeased with the boldness of his friend, and not inclined to continue the subject. A fortunate interruption here prevented further embarrassment.

In the distance, an immense man was seen running. Soon the giant, Ling, was recognized approaching in fiery haste, panting and perspiring, his whole soul beaming in his face. His small eyes sparkled; his grin of joy disclosed his white, regular teeth; his cheek bones appeared to assume increased prominence, and his yellow skin glistened with his delight. Even

his pig-tail had an ecstasy in its vibrations. Eager as he was, he did not forget his oriental politeness. Standing before the gentleman, he crossed his arms over his breast, and made an obeisance, so that his forehead almost touched the ground. This accomplished, the suppressed fire broke forth :

“Me habee foundee ’em. Thesee papers see. In ’Nappolee, time one—time two, in Halidonee Virginee—Mellika can’tee hide now theemee—theemee we habee certinee.”

He gave to Mr. Petrovich an Annapolis weekly which had an account of the scene we have described at the annual hop of the Naval Academy, and then a paper recording the performances of Tip and Lil in Halidon, and several other villages of southern Virginia. Mr. Petrovich read the narratives with profound interest and emotion, and then gave them to Nicolai, who ran his eye over them with even keener attention.

After a few moments of deep reflection, Mr. Petrovich inquired :

“Where did you find these papers, Ling? This is, indeed, opportune and wonderful. The light we wished shines amid our deepest gloom. Tell me, tell me, how and where did you obtain these newspapers?”

“New Yorkee!” answered the giant. “In paper-place me readee manee, manee, manee, very manee—this ’Nappolee one me findee; go there firstee. No Tippee, no Lilliee, no Tojee, no nobodee—me to New Yorkee; come backee—readee, readee, readee, three days

readee—then this Virginee paper me finde—here me come soonee—mustee go to Halidonee soonee, certinee.”

“What do you think, Nicolai?” inquired Mr. Petrovich, when that gentleman had finished the papers.

“Think!” he responded; “think! think! Surely our prayers are answered! We have the clew we sought. How marvelous! Noonday has come into our midnight! Onward, I say, onward! Our reward is near.”

“I am by no means so enthusiastic,” said Mr. Petrovich; “yet I am impelled forward by circumstances. Besides, I wish to see the South once more before I meet the Emperor. Ling, engage our places for the next train, through Richmond to the station nearest Halidon.”

The giant again drew up his enormous stature, crossed his hands, made his deep reverence, and departed to execute the commands of his master.

On the next morning, the gentlemen and the Chinese servant were in Halidon. Inquiry proved that Tip and Lil had spent several weeks in the neighborhood. Many persons described them so minutely that mistake was impossible. It was finally ascertained that they had been last seen at the house of the Rev. Mr. Wellington, several miles distant, and thither the pursuers repaired. Entering the lawn, they were struck with the imposing old brick edifice—an impressive monument of the plantation times—spacious and venerable, with its immense green wooden shutters, its gigantic piazza, its ample halls, and lofty parlor, and large library, stored with volumes of sterling literature,



“He had retired to spend his last days in the old mansion and on the old estate.”
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which, unlike the house, will never be antiquated. On either side of the front walk, two splendid mimosas, in full bloom, spread their wide branches and gave forth their sweet odors; around many of the greatest trunks climbed the luxuriant ivy, and high amid their leaves flashed the brilliant creeper-flower. Noble magnolias delighted to display their southern glories. More imposing than all, a vast oak, like an aged patriarch, stretched out his arms of blessing, and threw around his refreshing circumference of shade.

The Rev. Mr. Wellington, an Episcopal clergyman, was a gentleman of English descent and Yankee education. He had married a superior Virginia lady of distinguished family, and, after many years of active service, had retired to spend his last days in the old mansion and on the old estate. But benevolence in him was a flowing fountain, whose streams *would* gush round in blessing. His Master's work was still supreme. All his spare time and strength were devoted to the education of the colored people. He thus gilded his declining years with the light of love, and his very face beamed with the brightness of his soul. Conservative by nature, but with habits of keenest observation, no man in the country had so deeply and thoroughly mastered the southern social and political problems.

Mr. Petrovich and Nicolai, ascending the steps of the piazza and ringing at the door, were ushered by a colored servant into a reception-room, and immediately refreshed with ice-water. Their cards were soon answered by Mr. Wellington himself, who met them

with the cordial southern hospitality. After some explanations and general inquiries, Mr. Petrovich proceeded to the business of his visit.

"And now, reverend sir," he began, "will you pardon my intrusion on your time and privacy, and give me information on a subject to me of supreme importance."

"Place me at your disposal, gentlemen," answered Mr. Wellington, with his frank smile; "I promise to do for you everything in my power."

"Thank you, sir; thank you," said Mr. Petrovich. "We have to ask you concerning a boy and a girl, whom, we are informed, were at your house some weeks since. They were wandering over the country, one with a guitar and the other with a harp, and we were told in Halidon that they had been in your own house."

"I am, indeed, glad that I can assist you," replied Mr. Wellington. "The children you seek were sick here for more than two weeks, and I learned many things about them of most curious interest."

"Wonderful," exclaimed Nicolai. "Now I am certain that we are on the right path. The solution of the mystery is not far away."

"You will oblige me exceedingly," rejoined Mr. Petrovich, "by relating fully all you saw and heard that you may deem important of those two young wanderers. If you can aid me in my search, you will confer a lasting obligation, and not on me alone, but also on his Majesty of Russia."

"About a month since," resumed Mr. Wellington, now deeply interested, "while sitting in my piazza, I

heard a sweet girl's voice in a song accompanied by harp and guitar. The music was so superior to the ordinary itinerant grind and whine that I called the performers to me, and gave them some compliments, and a small piece of money. In a day or two they both returned and I perceived in them the symptoms of a burning fever. They implored my help and protection with such childish earnestness and simplicity that I could not repel them from my house. The fever soon became fierce and dangerous. Often they were in a delirium, and haunted by frightful visions of a man they called Ruric. Then their shrieks were terrible and their agony most pitiable."

"That identifies them beyond a doubt," interrupted Mr. Petrovich, "as the persons for whom we are making inquiry. Ruric was their cruel master and their greatest dread."

"That I discovered," said Mr. Wellington. "The girl especially would hold up her hands as if pursued by a spectre, and beg, in the most touching tones, for deliverance."

"Did she give any hint who she was, or where she came from, in her ravings?" asked Mr. Petrovich, with intense anxiety.

"Oh, yes," answered Mr. Wellington. "She talked of her father and mother incessantly, but in an incoherent way, and the boy fancied himself an Indian prince. But I attributed what they said to the effects of their fever."

"Did nothing else transpire to shed light on their

history?" inquired Mr. Petrovich, more eagerly than ever.

"Your question suggests an important circumstance," answered Mr. Wellington, "I had strangely forgotten. When the physician examined them in their sleep, on each was found a most costly and beautiful locket."

"Locket?" exclaimed the gentlemen, startled, together.

"Yes! it is, indeed, surprising," said Mr. Wellington, "one on each. That worn by the girl was in two oval parts of gold, united by a hinge, having on one side the face of a lady, on the other of a gentleman. The gems were most precious, and the workmanship exquisite. On the back were the words in French—*Ma petite fille.*"

"This is, indeed, of consequence," exclaimed Mr. Petrovich, while his eyes sparkled and his face glowed with excitement. "What became of this locket?"

"Of course," replied Mr. Wellington, "I had no right to keep things so precious. We thought it not best even to tell the children what we discovered, and both lockets, after examination, were hung again on their necks."

"May I inquire," said Nicolai, "what was the appearance of the locket on the boy? We have no immediate interest in him, but the information may have a collateral value."

"The locket of the lad," responded the clergyman, "was even more valuable and beautiful than that of the girl. It glittered with gems. On it was the

face of a man with a flowing beard and a turbaned head, and evidently a prince, if I might judge by his royal look. Beneath, in Arabic, was the name—*Hyder Ali*."

"What became of the children?" asked Mr. Petrovich, with overwhelming interest. "I suppose they went away together."

"Yes; after their recovery," responded Mr. Wellington. "I saw them in that wood in eager conversation with a lad who was either a Japanese or a Chinese. They came back to the house, offered me a compensation, which, of course, was refused; thanked me, with tears in their eyes, and, taking their instruments, started forth sadly on their journey."

After this conversation, ceaseless efforts were made to discover in what direction Lil and Tip had gone. All was in vain. The pursuit was once more baffled, and a cloud again settled over everything. Ling, however, was never discouraged. He seemed armed with an invincible patience, affirming that another paper from his confederate in New York would soon arrive and shed light on their path.

While thus compelled to wait, Mr. Petrovich and Nicolai called on Mr. Wellington, to thank him for his kind offices. The clergyman said to them:

"Would you not like to see the commencement of my colored school? Our year is just closing, and I think you will be interested in the exercises which are to be held in a church, of itself a curiosity. I strongly advise you to come with me. You will learn much that

will enable you to understand better our complicated negro problem."

The gentlemen gladly assenting, they were soon on their way to the place.

Crowning a hill, they saw a cruciform edifice made of hewn pine logs. The roof was steep, and the wide eaves appeared almost to reach the ground. Ivy wreathed itself over the gables of the building and parts of the sides, climbing here and there to the apex, and the chatter of birds told that they had found a welcome home. The pine, the maple, the oak, and the chestnut stood around with their mingling shadows, and just below was a sparkling spring. A rustic altar, and a chancel-rail of twisting vines, and a lecturn and pulpit in a corresponding style, evinced the taste of both the architect and the clergyman.

Many people had assembled in and around the edifice. The spectators were mostly colored, but some whites were looking curiously, perhaps a little cynically. The exercises began with a brief prayer and a few verses from the Bible. Then occurred an exhibition, until our own age, impossible in the history of the world. Little colored children, almost infants, emitted from between their shining teeth short speeches, and lisped through simple dialogues; the larger boys declaimed creditably; four preachers, black, and grave heads of families, who, after years spent as religious teachers had first learned to read, stumbled through their parts—one mulatto girl declaimed *Hiawatha*, kneeling in her tragic agony, clasping her hands, and lifting her eyes toward

heaven. The orator of the occasion, whose name was White, although dark as ebony, proved himself quite an African Demosthenes.

After these intellectual exercises, followed a more animalistic employment. Beneath the trees, an ample luncheon was spread by the negroes, and to which they invited the gentlemen, waiting on them with delicate and dignified courtesy, and afterward partaking themselves with the most eager and evident satisfaction. A procession through the grove, with songs wild and loud, closed the exercises of the day, and then, men, women and children, seated in groups, discussed busily what they had seen and heard.

Mr. Petrovich and Nicolai, standing by Mr. Wellington, under the limbs of a great tulip poplar, watched the scene with profound attention. The first gentleman exclaimed :

“This is, indeed, a picture! A scene never to be forgotten! We may read here the future of a race and of a continent. I can scarcely believe it possible that any of these people were ever slaves. Here I behold the only possible solution to the negro problem. Its key is a Christian education.”

“That is my conclusion,” answered Mr. Wellington, greatly gratified. “Many questions, social and political, arise, which I cannot answer. But upon the duty of *educating*, there can be but a single opinion.”

“I am astonished,” continued Mr. Petrovich, “at the exercises of this day, which, while sometimes amusing, were certainly creditable and encouraging.”

"The aptness of some of my scholars," said Mr. Wellington, "is often surprising. Generally, they are quick to learn. A few have decided talent, and others are hopelessly stupid. They are governed much more easily than white children, are naturally more religious, and in refinement of feeling they are remarkable."

"Are they the equals of the Saxons?" inquired Nicolai.

"In quickness of intelligence and delicacy of perception, they are," replied Mr. Wellington, decidedly; "but by no means in courage, in enterprise, in intellectual depth and breadth, and in power and loftiness of character. And yet, even in these respects, there are individual instances of a high endowment. The Saxons have those attributes which will always make them the dominant race."

"But I see faces here indicating rugged and invincible purpose," said Mr. Petrovich. "The lines cannot be mistaken."

"You are right," answered Mr. Wellington. "I spoke only in general terms. See that great, black fellow, laughing, near the door! He was half his life a slave. Yet after ten years of labor and economy, he has made his last payment, and obtained clear title to a large farm, which is the best managed and most productive in the neighborhood. His wife has been his equal in thrift and industry."

"Are such instances numerous?" inquired Mr. Petrovich.

"I am sorry to say they are not," said Mr.

Wellington. "Usually the negro cannot think thus for himself. Yet there are instances of rare independence of character. Mark that clerical-looking man, with his white tie and distinctive African features! He is forty years of age, and has two grown daughters. A year since he was an itinerant preacher who could not read. He sold his horse, and came here to learn his letters, and is now well advanced in the elementary branches of knowledge."

"Remarkable, indeed!" exclaimed Nicolai. "Do the women ever show the same desire to learn?"

"I can point to you in these groups," replied Mr. Wellington, "six married women, one a grandmother, who have walked many miles every Saturday for a year, and now each one of them can read her Bible."

"Surely, your neighborhood must be a remarkable one, and your own methods of teaching unusually fruitful!" interposed Nicolai again.

"In this region the masters were almost invariably kind," said Mr. Wellington, "and they have left their traces on the entire population. About the towns, the negroes are almost hopeless pilferers, idle and dissipated, and, in the far South, seem often simply bestial and irreclaimable pagans. All that relates to the race is complicated and bewildering."

"How merry and ringing is that laugh!" remarked Mr. Petrovich. "Many of these people certainly have great humor. The eye often gleams, the thick lips have a peculiar grin, and every feature is stamped with jollity."

"Wit, too, they sometimes exhibit," said Mr. Wellington, "as well as humor. See that little weasened negress at the foot of the maple? That is Aunt Elsie. She was once praying in her cabin, in great distress, for bread. Some mischievous boys, hearing her, resolved to answer her supplications. They obtained a few loaves, and rolled them down her chimney. When they tumbled on the floor at her feet, she was at first astonished, and then she burst out into words of praise and gratitude. While thus ecstatic, the rogues, opening the door, cried, 'Oh, Aunt Elsie, it wasn't the Lord! We rolled them down the chimney!' Looking at the boys earnestly a moment, and then lifting her spectacles, the pious old negress replied, 'Wall, de Lawd sent dat bread, if de debel brought it.'"

"Good, indeed!" exclaimed Nicolai. "Pious and pointed! The wit of Voltaire and the theology of St. Gregory!"

The gentlemen laughed heartily, and many eyes turned toward them their white inquiring balls.

"On the other hand," resumed Mr. Wellington, "we have instances of the most hopeless stupidity and ignorance. Sometimes conscience seems absolutely dead. Voters sell themselves for trifles. In office, the negro has been an absurd and grotesque failure. His mistakes were amusing and his peculations monstrous and astounding. One very funny thing I must relate to you. Do you see that ebony giant at the head of the table, burying his black face in a huge melon? He

was elected sheriff of our county. Shortly after a man was committed to jail in the usual form for thirty *days*. It was just after the war and the jail was exceedingly out of repair. Our prosecuting attorney, anxious to hear how the prisoner had been kept in so insecure a place, inquired: 'Uncle Tom, how did you manage with Bill Dickey in that old jail, so that he didn't give you the slip?'"

"Easy, Massa! berry easy, sare," answered Uncle Tom. "Bill Dickey honest fellow. He went home ebbery night, and comes back next mornin'."

"But, Uncle Tom, was that carrying out the sentence of the court?"

"'Zackly, Massa, 'zackly," replied our wise jailer. "Judge said thirty *days*, said nuffin' 'bout nights.'"

After the gentlemen had enjoyed their laugh, Nicolai inquired:

"Are not the negroes fanatical in their religious dispositions? I have heard it asserted that, after all their professions of Christianity, they are in their hearts and lives still heathen."

"A great mistake," said Mr. Wellington. "Often, indeed, their meetings are scenes of the most frenzied excitement. Their screams seem diabolical and their actions those of demoniacs. This madness many think religion, and never connect it with a good conscience and a right life. One minister, in the midst of the most tumultuous uproar, excused himself, and five minutes after was shot dead in a neighbor's crib in the act of stealing his corn. An old apostate white man,

who mocked his former faith by baptizing an opossum in the name of the Trinity, can even now stir them into furious religious excitements. Yet, in the midst of these excesses, I find examples of the most perfect, beautiful and intelligent piety. I wish some of our own extreme clergymen were half as well grounded in the orthodox faith as many of these very negroes. Their knowledge of Scripture is often wonderful, and their perceptions of duty clear and powerful."

"May I venture a question, suggested by the condition of our own freed serfs?" inquired Mr. Petrovich. "I expect to report your answer to his Majesty. Has the emancipation of the negro been a benefit or an injury?"

"I answer, without hesitation, 'A benefit!'" replied Mr. Wellington, instantly. "Freedom is right and therefore best. Yet, in particular cases, it often appears otherwise. On many of our old plantations, life was truly patriarchal. Frequently I have seen a wise and kind master, almost a type of human happiness, and his slaves apparently as contented as mortals can be in this world of evil and anxiety. I could draw in bright colors some beautiful pictures of the ancient plantations. But by a few owners in this region, and often in the rice, sugar and cotton fields of the distant south, the slave was cruelly worked. Occasionally he was the victim of a mere tyrant. Lust, too, was debasing and ruinous. Besides, in his most favored condition, there was always over the slave the shadow of a fear, lest the death or pecuniary necessities of a good master

might force sales and separations. Dark as are some of the difficulties yet before us, I believe that emancipation will prove a blessing to both races and to our entire country. Under a common flag we will now work out a great and noble destiny."

"I fear that I have wearied you," said Mr. Petrovich, smiling; "and yet I am tempted by my great interest, and that of my country, in these questions, to make another inquiry. Do you think the races will commingle, and the negroes ever lose their distinctive color, form, and physiognomy?"

"Never! in my opinion," answered Mr. Wellington, decidedly. "The barriers seem to me impassable. I infer the future from the past. After two centuries, the races are still distinct."

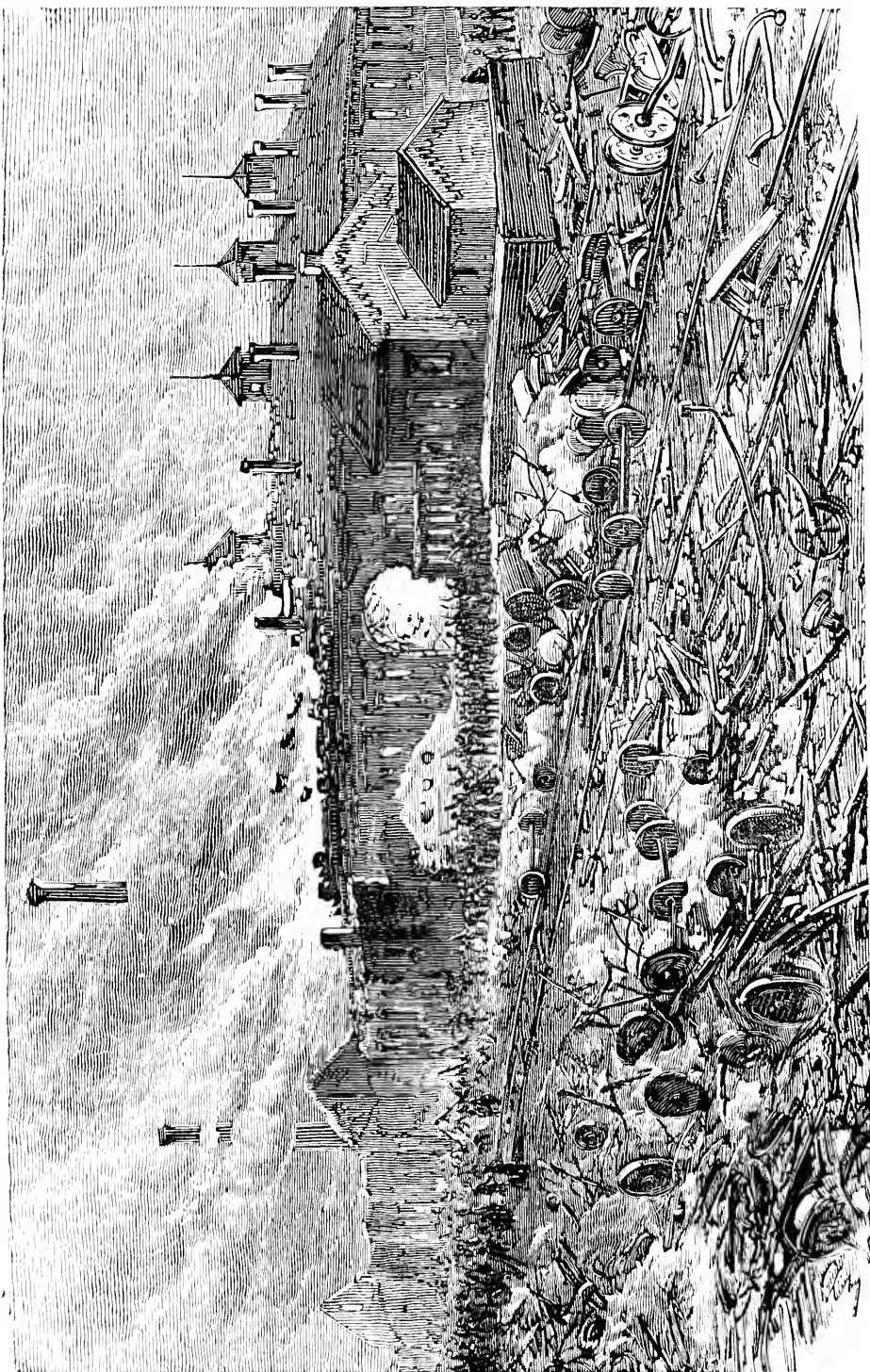
"Then, it seems to me," replied Mr. Petrovich, "that the negro problem is not only unsolved, but insolvable. In the emancipation of our serfs, time will overthrow the separating barriers; while with you, there is a difference of races, and consequently of social classes and political interests, made by the Almighty himself, ineradicable in our human nature. This is, to me, the most ominous and mysterious aspect of the whole bewildering subject."

"This I concede," said Mr. Wellington, sadly and thoughtfully. "My only hope is in doing right. Freedom is right, education is right, social elevation is right. Beyond this I have no sure light. Nothing can be more trying than our practical difficulties at this moment. The negro has a legal title to vote and

hold office. Give him his rights, and we have all the absurdities and monstrosities, in some States and many counties, of negro rule! Hence, to keep him from the ballot-box, fraud and violence are practised by men otherwise reliable and excellent. It is hard to blame them, and hard to excuse them. I have one hope in the future. Soon the South will invite Northern capital and foreign immigration, and be a hive of industry, in which the white population will preponderate and control the negro, and thus give us, in effect, a homogeneous society and government. As colored men increase in intelligence and property, they will be more and more inclined to escape their embarrassments here by migrating to those noble states yet to be founded amid the beautiful lakes and healthful mountains of interior Africa. If this be a dream, I feel certain that Heaven will open some better way, and that our Flag will float forever, a symbol of union, over our whole glorious land."

The gentlemen now separated, and we will soon relate what ensued after this most interesting conversation.





"In every section of the Republic were experienced the ruinous effects of the Great Strike."
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CHAPTER XIV.

THE GREAT STRIKE'S TRIUMPH AND DEFEAT.



MOVEMENTS of minds sometimes resemble those of avalanches. See in the mountain gorge that glittering pile, waiting the touch of one more sunbeam before it thunders over its precipice and whitens the valley with its ruin! Ages formed it, but a moment lets it loose.

Over the whole country was a vast organized strike. Local associations of the toilers, in their successive gradations, communicated with each other, and finally were brought under one supreme directing Head. Funds were abundant. There were signs and countersigns, and, over all, a certain mystery specially attractive to the uneducated. Labor contemplated bringing Capital into subjection. It was intended to obstruct railroads, stop the way of trade to markets, foreign and domestic, and, if necessary, overthrow the Government itself. And the plan seemed feasible. It relied on the power of numbers, and their essential daily work in supplying the essential daily needs of the country. The conspirators argued that, without

blood, the body politic must expire, and that labor was the blood of the body politic, whose life or death were at their disposal. Over the whole land, the stupendous scheme had extended itself. The avalanche was in suspense. A touch, a ray, a breath, will start its gigantic mass.

The impulse was not long wanting. Saul Bidman's advice to Walter Sparker was the remote cause of the ruin. Its immediate cause was the death of Belle Standfast. The fiery passions awakened by her wrongs precipitated the strike, already organized and awaiting such a propulsive power. Workingmen identified themselves with her family. A son of Capital had wantonly seduced, disgraced, and destroyed a daughter of Labor. Socialistic orators were keen to take advantage of the fact, and trumpet it abroad. The father, indeed, said nothing, but he was a silent man, and it was taken for granted that he was ready for revenge, and would act with the orders against the class from which had proceeded such a mortal injury. The air was full of flame. Ruric seemed inspired with a demoniac eloquence. He was a torch over the land. His hour had come. An angel of ruin could not have been better qualified for his work. Mobs were incited, shops were occupied, railroads were seized, trains were plundered, depots were destroyed, cities were in a blaze. Capital, for the hour, was prostrate before Labor. States were paralyzed. Even the Federal Government doubted whether it could protect the lives and property of its citizens. Belle Standfast's name

was a watchword over the land. It started the avalanche.

On the night before the strike was to burst over Alma, two men might have been seen moving stealthily in the shadows to the house of General Adam Sparker. They evidently wished to avoid observation, and, stepping lightly over the porch, they tapped at the rear door, and were admitted. After waiting a few minutes, Edward Stewart and John Standfast found themselves in the library of General Sparker who sat in his customary chair, but looking sad and worn.

The old President and his trusted shop-master had not met since the tragic day appointed for a wedding, and made preparative for a funeral. Each, as ever, esteemed the other. Explanations were unnecessary. Death lacerates, but cannot divide true hearts. John Standfast knew that Adam Sparker abhorred the conduct of his son, and had done all in his power to repair the infamous wrong. This was sufficient. The eyes of the friends met, and their hands grasped in all the warmth of their old love, esteem and confidence.

"Well, John," began the General, after a brief and impressive silence; "the hour you foresaw has arrived. You were a true prophet. We will soon be in the midst of tumult, violence and bloodshed. To me this is a fearful disappointment. I had hoped better things, and believed that our men would not desert me. However, I have long since found in this world that

we must accept the situation, and do not as we *would*, but as we *can*."

"Yes, General," answered John, "it is worse than I predicted. This Strike covers the whole country. Even some of our most reliable men are caught in the snare. Nearly all seem on fire. Ruric has stirred their worst passions, and many are eager for blood and flames."

"This grieves me deeply," cried the General, with a tear in his eye. "Mr. Stewart, I understand that you sent telegrams to the Governor and the President for troops to protect the property of the Company."

"I was forced to take the responsibility, General," replied Edward. "But the soldiers of the State can not be relied on. The hearts of our militia are with the mob, and, when the crisis comes, rather than fire they fraternize, and even turn their muskets against those they were sent to protect. Our Federal troops cannot reach us on account of the obstruction on the railroads."

"Then, it seems, we are utterly abandoned, and at the mercy of the mob," exclaimed the General. "Who will defend our shops and the other property of the Company? It is even worse than I feared."

"But, General," interposed John, hastily; "I have one comfort for you. Ten of the men relieved in your hospital, and the three old fellows supported by your Veteran's Fund have offered their services, and swear they will die in your defense. Indeed, they now stand guard, and will shed their blood, if necessary."

"This is, indeed, one bright ray in our gloom," said the General, as the tears rained from his eyes, and his voice and form trembled with emotion. "I am glad of this. After all, I have not mistaken human nature. We will triumph in the end. I have relied on justice and benevolence as my arms, and Heaven will give us the victory, perhaps at the sacrifice of my own life."

"And do you remember drunken Pat Corrigan?" inquired John. "Against the protests of all your friends, you gave him work on your lawn, and kept his family from beggary. He has sworn away from whisky at last, confessed to the priest, taken the communion once more, and, I believe, that he will fight for us, until the last drop—Stewart says of whisky, but I think of blood. To-morrow will prove who is right. Drunkard as Pat is, he has a warm and true Irish heart."

"I take hope from this, slight as it may seem," answered the General, slowly and thoughtfully. "It is pleasant to know that we are not wholly betrayed and abandoned. You, my friends, I knew could be trusted, under all circumstances. What do you propose for to-morrow?"

"We have the ten hospital men, the three veterans, Pat Corrigan, John and myself—in all, sixteen—and we are resolved to defend our post while we have a charge of powder and a bullet for the mob, should they be numerous as wolves and fierce as tigers. Your three old rheumatic fellows hobbled to the shop on their

crutches, and I believe the very sight of them will scare or shame a hundred wild beasts."

The General smiled. He was contented. Such fidelity shed a beauty and a glory over his closing life.

"Thank you, my friends," he exclaimed, grasping their hands. "Thank you. My heart is full. Your loyalty has saved my old age from despair. Now I am willing to die, and I feel that my departure is near. It is but a step to Paradise."

"But, General," interposed Standfast, "will you not accept part of our guard for yourself? We are willing to divide. At least take the veterans," he added, laughing.

"Never, John! never!" said the General vehemently. "I would not have one of their crutches, much less their muskets. For myself, I trust in the Almighty. I need no other shield. Powder and lead will never be used by me against my men, even should they make me their victim."

"Your words suggest to me," interrupted Edward, "what had not occurred before. Dr. Bidman is in mortal peril. The hatred toward him is without a limit, and on him the storm will first discharge itself. His house is a fortress, but his guards are not to be trusted. Even his money cannot bribe them into his defense. At the first appearance of the mob, he will be deserted."

"Ha!" exclaimed the General, "I had not thought of that. This is, indeed, terrible. I fear the worst,

and see no escape for him. He that taketh the sword, it seems, is to perish by the sword. What is your opinion, John?"

"I agree entirely with Mr. Stewart," answered Standfast.

"Then," said the General, "we must make an effort to save him. I can tell you what to do, but it is necessary to communicate to you a great secret, known only to three persons. The Doctor, in his alarm, caused a subterranean passage to be dug from his house to mine, by a workman sworn and paid never to disclose the fact. John, will you not go and persuade him to make his refuge with me? Here he will have at least a chance for his life, whereas, there, death is certain. I fear that he will not be convinced, and I know that he has no title to your kindness."

"Do not think of that, General," replied Standfast, at once. "I will save him if I can."

He received from his aged friend the keys of the door of the passage, listened to his directions, struck a match, seized and lighted a lamp he saw on the table, and proceeded on his errand. Groping in the dim rays, beneath the earth, he at last emerged into the cellar of his enemy, and, mounting the stairs, knocked at the room where he supposed Bidman most likely to be found. Nor was he mistaken. A hollow voice bade him enter. Before him was his foe in ghastly terror. Yes! Bidman is confronted by the father whose daughter had been disgraced, frenzied, killed by that fatal advice to Walter Sparker. Blood was on the soul of

the coward, and he thought that the hour of vengeance had now come. In his insane alarm, he seized, cocked, and levelled his revolver, crying :

“John Standfast, stop! Come no nearer! Why are you here? Explain! Advance another step and I will shoot you.”

“I am here by the command of General Sparker for your own good. A ball from your pistol through my heart would destroy your last hope of life.”

“How did you come?” gasped Bidman, in horrible fear. “Did my guards admit you against my orders? Have you bought them? or have they deserted? Tell me how you got here and what you want.”

As he talked, his teeth chattered and his flesh quivered in his fright.

“I came through the underground passage by the General’s direction,” answered Standfast, gazing into the eye of his foe.

“It’s a lie!” howled Bidman. “General Sparker lies. You lie yourself. It’s a cursed plan to ruin me.”

“But Doctor,” said John, “here is the proof of my commission. In my hand I hold the keys of the passage given me by your father-in-law. I have come to inform you that your guards will not suffer your escape, and yet will betray you when the moment of peril arrives. These men have sworn to have your life, and you are wholly in their power. Your only safety is with General Sparker. His influence may protect you. I advise you to come with me through the secret way to his house.”

"Another lie!" exclaimed Bidman, aghast and scarcely knowing what he said. "You are all against me and mean my ruin. My money will keep my men true. Nothing else will. Gold, I tell you, gold is my hope. I am safe, by Heaven, I am safe in this place. I can't die, and I won't die, and I'll never leave. Go! I don't want your help! Begone! The sight of you crazes me! Out of my room, John Standfast."

"I will obey you, Doctor, in a moment," answered the noble man, unmoved by the insult. "But first I would persuade you. Don't throw away your only chance of life. The State soldiers have proved treacherous, the Federal troops cannot reach us, and when the mob attacks you they will show no mercy. I have come to save you, only to be met with insults and a pistol, and I can only once more beg you to follow my advice, and not fling away your only chance of flight and safety."

"John," replied Bidman, in a more subdued tone. "I acknowledge that I suspected you where, I hope, you intended me no harm. But I must decline your offer, and remain in my own house, which is so strongly fortified that I believe I can hold out until the troops come for my rescue."

Having said this, Bidman paused, evidently desiring no further interruption, and Standfast had to leave him to his fate.

It seemed impossible for the doomed wretch to conceive in the breast of the man he had wronged any

thing except the hate and vengeance which burned in his own. His dark soul made him suspect that even General Sparker was a confederate for his injury. How dreadful is guilt thus left to itself! The rich rascal is alone in the world! Not one to help him! How vain the gold on which he depends for his life! He has realized the dreams of his ambition! The place he coveted he has reached! His wealth is fabulous. Yet not on earth one friend, and in Heaven vengeance instead of defense! Success crowns a spectre rather than a man! The ghosts of an evil past are rising round to mock him in his lonely, helpless misery. Who can estimate his tortures as he walks restlessly through his splendid mansion? Those ample rooms, those stately halls, that costly furniture,—pictures, vases, statues—what gilded trumpery now! The flowers of his conservatory, in their innocent beauty, seem laughing at him. He starts and trembles as he sees his ghastly face in a magnificent mirror! One night has done the work of years, and he gazes on an old man. His words to Walter Sparker, counselling desertion and dishonor, are burning about him in a glaring flame that points his path to destruction.

The eventful day began in gloom. Occasional clouds drifted over the sun, and the air was chilled by thick mists. As the morning advanced the whole sky became obscured. Great masses of black clouds piled to the zenith their threatening forms, often quivering with lightnings, and growling with low thunders. Not a

sound is in the shops. The puffing engine, the rattling band, the cutting drill, the shrill file, the clinking hammer—all are ominously silent. No fire glows in the furnace of a locomotive and no smoke ascends in sign of active work. Whole trains of cars are on the sidings and stretched in lines along the road. Over all are the chill and gloom and silence of desertion and death. In every section of the Republic were experienced the ruinous effects of the Great Strike.

After breakfast some few workmen assembled, pipe in mouth, and stood around, with hands in pockets, discussing the situation. Each moment the numbers increase. Now the grounds are filled. A few of the men have rifles, many pistols, nearly all knives, or daggers. While talking, their looks are dark and sullen, and they pull at their pipes with a savage earnestness, speaking in low tones, and often shaking their heads with gestures of discontent, and even of vengeance. Young drinking lads, and red-eyed, bloated men are specially noisy and blasphemous. Let us approach and hear from their lips what passes in their hearts!

“Hurrah!” cried Ned Bunce. “Our day’s come, and we’ll have it all our own way now! Capital can’t do without Labor more nor a man without his legs. Let the legs walk away from him, and the fellow tumbles, sure. Hurrah for the legs! They’re a walkin’ off with the whole country!”

“But,” said Jack Slow, slyly, “suppose the legs go and don’t come back agin to the body, where’ll they

git their blood. Seems to me legs needs the body much as the body needs the legs."

Flint was puzzled at this extension of his comparison, and scratched his head over the conclusion, but could not draw out an idea, and remained silent. Dick Sharp came to his assistance, saying:

"Curse you, Ned; you're on the side of Capital or you wouldn't talk in that style. I think the legs is doin' mighty well jist now—they're walkin' off with everything and will make their own way in the world, sure. Let 'em run away with all they can git from the Big Bugs, and have a good time while they can. Legs is up! Hurrah!"

Here Bill Driver interposed.

"Who cares for legs? I'm in for champagne—five dollars a bottle. I dreamed last night I heard a hundred corks pop, and that I was swimmin' and drinkin' in Bidman's cellar with the jolly stuff a sparklin' down Bill Driver's throat like water from a full tank into an empty tender."

"Champagne for arhistocrats!" cried Brian O'Shanty. "Whaskey for me, the ould Irish crathur, sich as Father Tom gave the Poope when he smhacked his houly lips, and all Roome heard the swate noise. Brian O'Shanty'll be in fur Bidman's whaskey, and Bidman's whaskey'll be into Brian O'Shanty, sure as there's a dry throat in Purgathory."

"Nah! Nah!" interposed Dutch Hans, with Teutonic disgust. "Te lager is'h te bhetters! Tat's vich I vants! Is'h dreamed too, last night, and it vas tat

mine troat vas von mile long, and tat Bidman's lager vas runnin' down all te vay, and I'se vokes up happier nor von king."

"His money chists for me," roared out Steve Clutch. "Money's champagne, whisky, lager, and every liquor you can think of. Money's house, dresses, vittles, edication, wife, children, coach, horses, driver, and all that makes the bug big, paints his wings and helps him fly higher nor his neighbors. Give me money, and I'll beller louder nor any frog in the puddle, Europe or America. They've lowered my pay and raised my work, and Steve Clutch proposes this mornin' to be even with 'em, and get what'll lift up his family, and ask nobody's leave."

"All wrong!" bellowed Andy Tinker, the shop-philosopher. "The State is everything, and none of us is nothing. Let the State sell out capital for the benefit of labor—cars, locomotives, houses, lands, all property of every kind—and divide the proceeds. Labor made it and labor ought to have it—each man his share. That's fair and square and my doctrine. Let labor have a good time, stay on top and keep capital down at the bottom, and then hurrah for freedom, short hours and equality!"

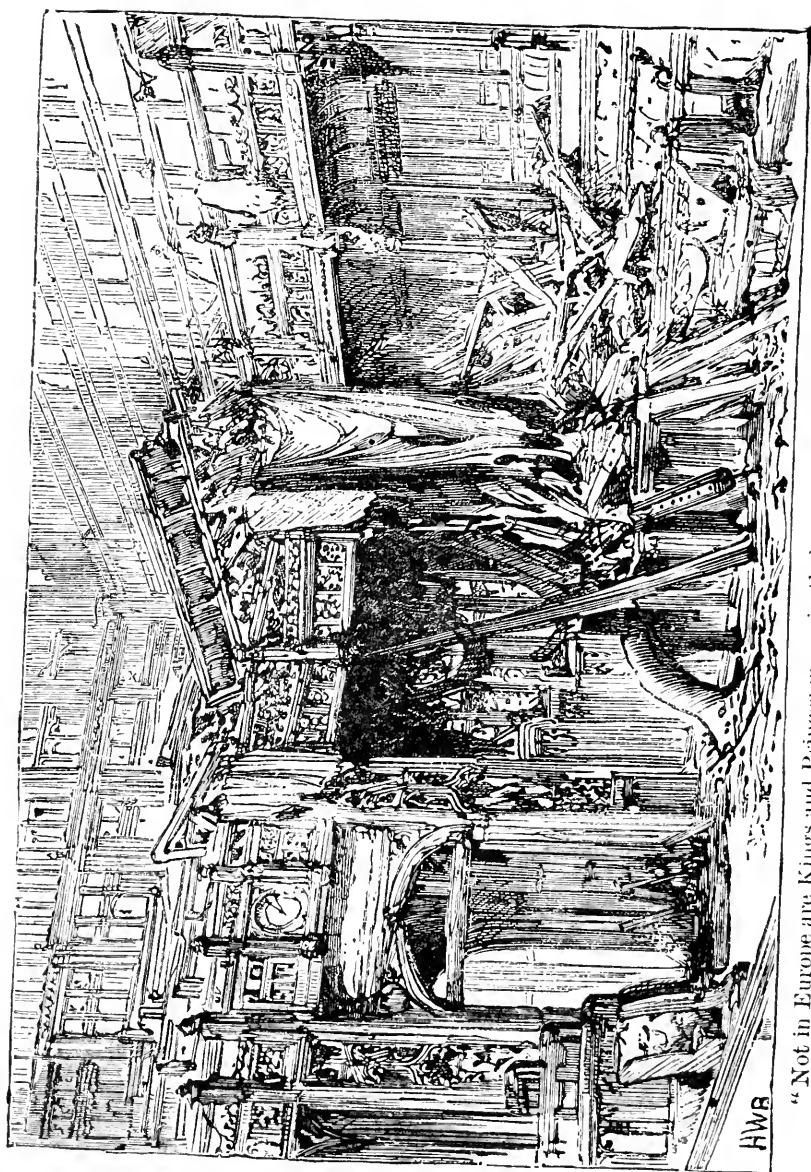
While these exchanges of wishes and opinions were progressing, a shrill whistle was heard in the distance. Hark! a low, thunderous rumble, interrupted by louder screams, re-echoed amid the mountain rocks. A head-light shows its broad glare through the mists, and with increasing noise the Eagle sweeps round a curve and

stops in the midst of the gathering crowd. Jim Fly, with his hand on the lever, leans forward, puts his face out of the window, and cries :

“Hurrah, boys ! I’ve done more nor I promised. I’ve run on my own account from the Hudson to the Mississippi, and back again, in spite of Uncle Sam and the Railroad Big Bugs. The Eagle’s free, and a jolly bird for a fast fly. Labor’s ahead in this race, and Capital stands a lookin’ on, with its hands in its pockets. It’s a comfortable feelin’ to have when you know no man’s your master, and Capital pays your bills. Hurrah for the Eagle ! Hurrah for Liberty ! Hurrah for Labor ! Three groans for Capital !”

The men responded loudly, and as they cheered, grew wild with excitement. Then followed hisses, groans, and shouts of derision. When the fury was greatest, and the noise loudest, the door of the passenger-car opened, and Ruric stood on the platform. As soon as he was seen the tumult ceased, and the men gazed on him in surprise and silent wonder, mingled with a feeling of mysterious awe. His long hair streamed in the morning winds ; his beard was shaggy and disordered ; his cheek hollow ; his eye had the look of blood ; his face was flushed with fierce passions ; and, altogether, he seemed like some avenging fury just ready to hurl the torch and let havoc loose. Pausing a moment to survey the crowd, he cried in clear, but sepulchral and ominous voice :

“Men, your hour has come ! Your battle has been fought and won. Capital is in the dust, and triumphant



HWA

"Not in Europe are Kings and Princes worse in their oppression than these railroad tyrants,"
Page 533.

Labor waves its banner over the whole land. Not in Europe are kings and princes and nobles worse in their oppressions than these infamous railroad tyrants, who grind you more despotically than even Czars and Emperors. You have been their slaves. You have reared their colossal fortunes. You, by your sweat and toil, have built their palaces and created their luxuries. Now you can take your back-pay. Have it to the last cent! Revenge yourselves in fire and blood. Blot out the tyrants! Destroy the old and bring in the new! Begin society over again, and found it on the rights of labor! See in me the victim of tyrants! Know in me what your masters will do! Whipped, chained, imprisoned, worked in dark mines, starved, mangled, banished, driven to despair by a despot in the old world, I have a right to advise you in the new to leave nothing, to wipe out the past! Strangle the vipers, destroy their nests, and kill their young! Begin this morning with a pistol in one hand and the torch in the other! Blood and fire! Your first victim should be Bidman. Remember Belle Standfast! A son of capital has dishonored a daughter of labor! Revenge!"

This spark kindled the magazine. The men recognized in Ruric their leader. His insane and murderous passion kindled the crowd into a blaze of inextinguishable excitement. Wild cries rent the air.

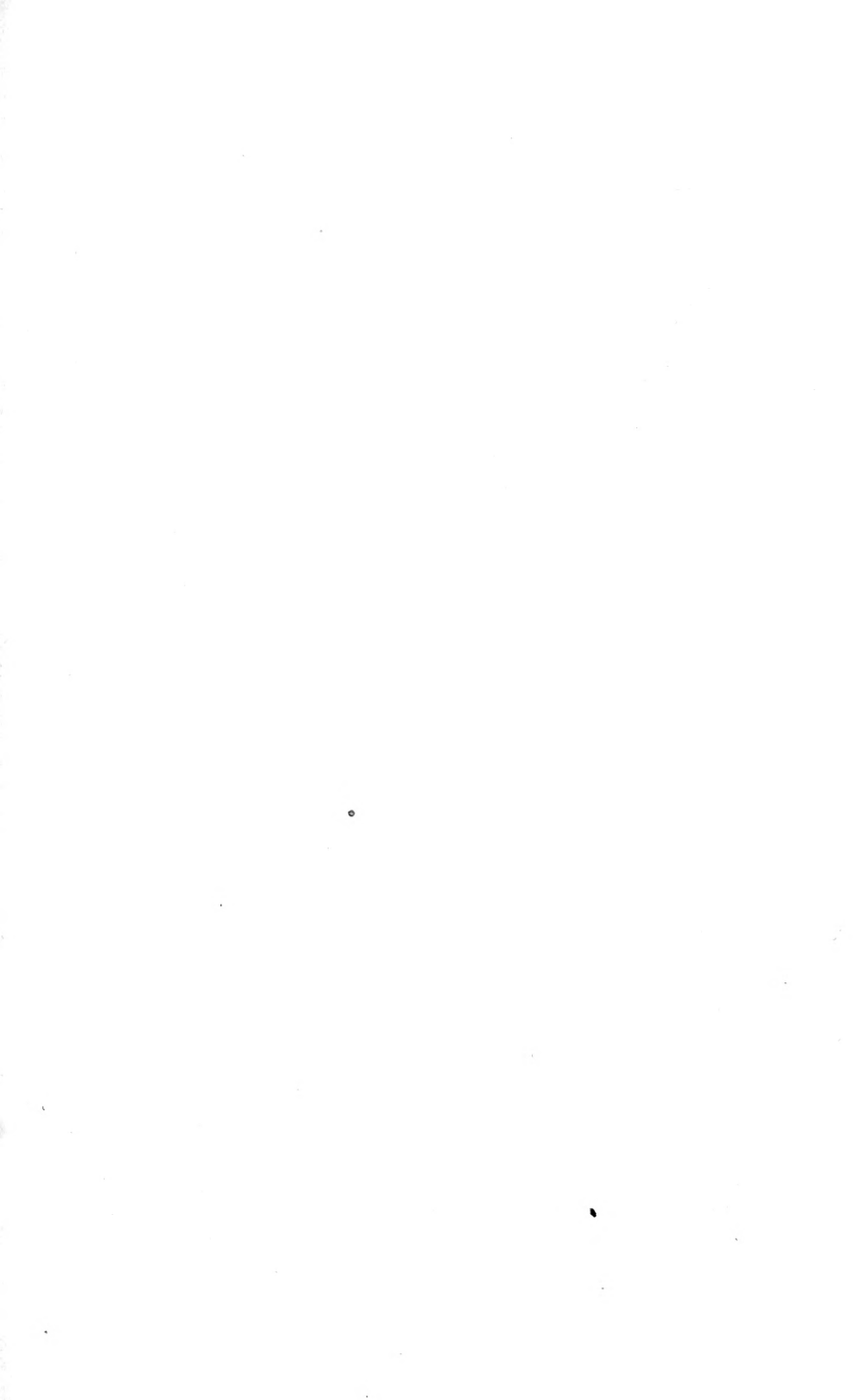
"Revenge! Down with Capital! Up with Labor! Let the workman have his own! Hurrah for the right! Bidman! Belle Standfast! Blood! Fire! Vengeance!"

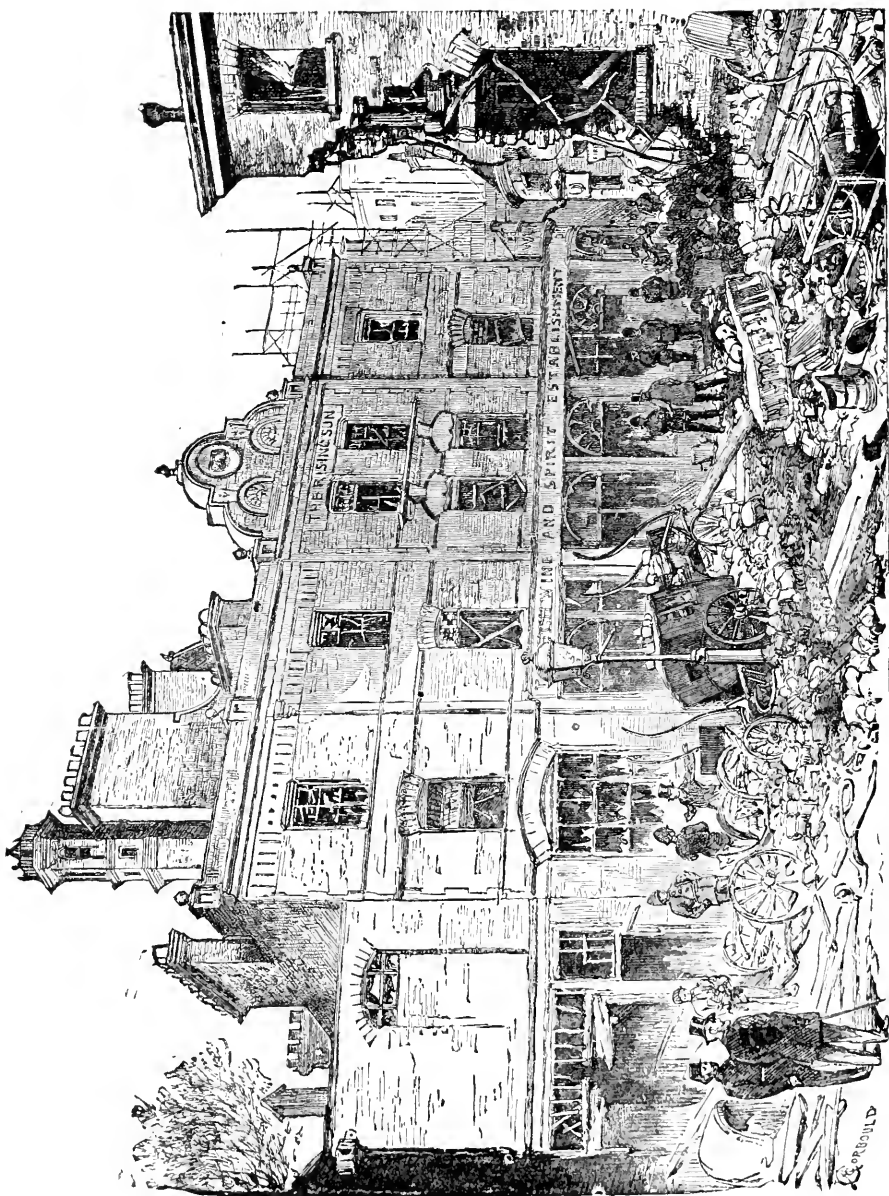
Ruric, with his rifle in his hand and his dagger and

pistols in his belt, leaping down from the car, placed himself at the head of the furious men. He led them directly to the house of Bidman. As they approached they met his six paid guards deserting their employer, and who, mingling with his assailants, increased the rage and noise of the tumult.

The miserable owner of the superb mansion had also witnessed the treachery of his hired defenders, and the sight drove him to despair. Already the armed crowd surrounded his dwelling, and escape was impossible. He saw vengeance in their looks, heard vengeance in their yells, and knew that his advice to Walter Sparker, in which was the blood of Belle Standfast, was hurled back on him by Heaven in vengeance.

Now he thought of the secret passage, through which he had disdained escape when suggested by John Standfast, the man he had wronged, and from whose lips he would receive no counsel. Perhaps the door might be open! He flew to it! The bolt was tight! He tried to undo it, but it was obstinately and fatally fast. Discouraged, he attempts to force the door from its hinges, and then to break through a panel. All his efforts are vain. He ascends the stairs. He goes to a window. Twenty pistols are leveled at his head. Shouts of execration salute his ears. He ran to the top of the house, lifted a trap-door, and thrust out his head. A ball from Ruric's rifle crashed through his jaw, and he fled, howling, below, amid the jeers and curses of the mob. Now he rushed frantically through the halls, swearing,





"Dynamite bombs won't take in America."

yelling, raving, wringing his hands, tearing his hair. What there fixes his eye? How he stares and glares! His breath stops. He sees an uplifted hand bearing a torch, and the flames creeping up the pillars of his piazza. Ha! his house is in a blaze! Fire and smoke are in league to burn and stifle him! In his frenzy, he rushes again to the roof. Soon as he is seen a hundred guns flash and crack, and his body is pierced with balls. Lo, a report like thunder! Both earth and heaven seem to shake, and the blazing fragments of the house are scattered widely and wildly through the air. The powder in the cellar has caught a spark and exploded. Thus the very agent provided by Saul Bidman for his safety has turned against him, and not a bone, not a nail, not a hair, not an atom of his body was ever seen by mortal eye.

Next, the crowd passes to the house of General Sparker. The old man is on his piazza! Courage is in his heart, his eye, his face. By the negligence of the servants, after John Standfast's inspection, the anvil of the patriarch had been left on the piazza, and unconsciously the patriarch stands on it. In life and death he was to be a type of Capital supported by Labor, and linking together the poor and the rich. His gray locks wave in the winds created by the flames, whose glare is on his venerable head, and he looks the personification of manly majesty. It had been his intention to address the crowd, but his quick and true instinct showed that silence would be more potent than words. Those arms folded with serene dignity; that

benevolent countenance breathing peace, sorrow, and forgiveness; that grand form and noble brow recalling his rectitude, his charity, and all the good deeds of more than half a century; all these had a persuasive and awful eloquence greater than belongs to the voice of the orator. His presence was the glory of his defense. Hard hearts were softened before him, and tears left their traces down rough and blackened cheeks. A sob shivered through the crowd. When Ruric lifted his rifle, a dozen hands pulled it down, and would have torn him to pieces had he touched the trigger. All that Benevolence and Justice can impress on humanity came out from those rude natures in that memorable hour, to prove in what is the true empire over men. Virtue was Heaven's shield over the old hero. Overcome by his exertions, he fell and expired, bewailed by those who had come with murderous threats against his life.

Baffled by this unexpected spectacle, some of the more hardened and desperate wretches of the mob now cried:

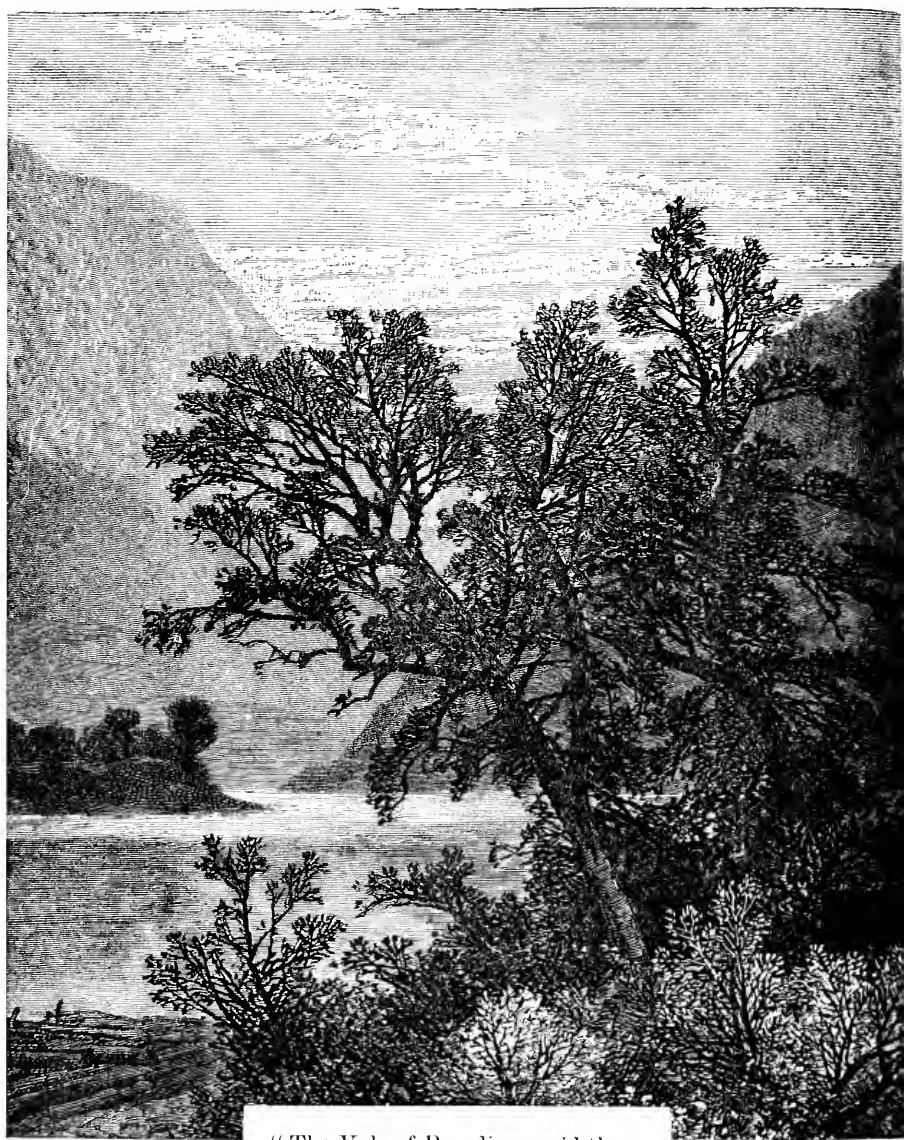
"To the shops! We will burn the shops! They belong to the company! Down with Capital! Hurrah for Labor! The shops! The shops! Fire and vengeance!"

To the shops many of the crowd rushed, and formed around them a circle. A wholesome fear was inspired when they saw the windows bristling with guns, and the ten guards made faithful by the hospital service, and the three veteran pensioners of General Sparker,

and Pat Corrigan, with his rifle on his shoulder, looking virtuous and resolved; and Edward Stewart, with unquailing eye, in command, and standing evidently ready to do his duty. A halt and a pause ensued, during which some of the lads began shooting blazing arrows, which were setting on fire the roof. Destruction was inevitable, and the mob stood, satisfied to see the advancing flames. But who creeps out of the hatchway? Rifles and pistols are ready. It is John Standfast, with a bucket of water in each hand. He quietly extinguishes the flames. Not a gun is leveled. What! Is this the man whom the mob expected to see maddened by his wrongs, and conspiring with them in death and destruction? Yes! it is even he! There he is, at his post, faithful to his trust, risking life for duty, repaying good for evil, periling himself to save the property of enemies who had ruined his daughter, sent his wife to her grave, and blasted his home, covering it with an eternal cloud of shame! An overpowering influence went forth from the hero. He was of themselves. General Sparker had risen into a different class. Hearts were moved and eyes moistened which had not yielded to the spell of the President's moral power. Silently the crowd disperses. On the very next day every man was in his place in the Alma shops, and soon the effect was visible along the whole line of the road, and, indeed, extended itself over the entire country. The Great Strike had received a mortal blow. RECTITUDE and BENEVOLENCE triumphed. Governments and

capitalists must build on THESE if they would continue to rule the laboring masses.

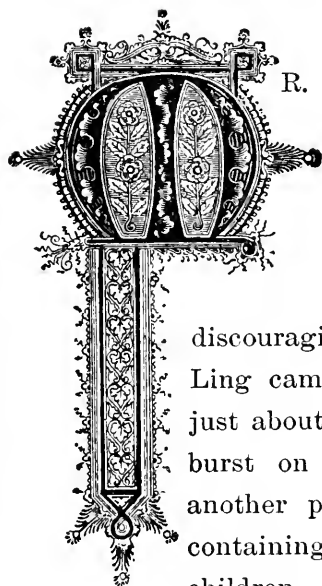




"The Vale of Paradise, amid those
gigantic mountains, standing like monarch sentinels robed in eternal verdure."
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CHAPTER XV.

AMID THE GOLD MOUNTAINS.



R. PETROVICH and Nicolai had remained in Halidon for some weeks after the disappearance of Tip and Lil, but could obtain no trace of their movements. The suspense was again long and discouraging. But at last the unfailing Ling came once more to their aid. When just about to abandon the pursuit, the giant burst on them with a joyful face, and another paper from the New York Agency containing an unmistakable account of the children. Fearing discovery, Ruric had directed Tojo to convey them by rail to Goldville, a town in the great mining region of the west.

Mr. Petrovich, after much hesitation and much persuasion on the part of Nicolai, finally consented to take Ling and follow. This, however, was to be his last effort. If it failed, he would return home immediately. Accordingly, the gentlemen and their servant took the cars at Halidon station, and, in a few days, found themselves in Goldville. Here it was discovered that the children had made a long sojourn, but without a

public exhibition. Soon it also appeared that Ruric and Tojo had been there directing their motions. This added greatly to the anxiety of the pursuers. After weary weeks, they could discover nothing to indicate where Tip and Lil had gone. Leaving the giant at Goldville to prosecute the search, Mr. Petrovich and Nicolai to relieve their minds and see the country, made numerous and distant excursions. They visited and explored the Yosemite, the Yellowstone, some Colorado cañons, and many of the most celebrated mines of the region. It was after a return from one of their longest journeys the conversation occurred we are now to record.

"I confess," said Mr. Petrovich, "I am totally discouraged in our search. The way never seemed so dark. I will wait here three more days, and unless we find some undoubted proofs, I will return to Russia."

"I agree with you," answered Nicolai. "We will not be justified in a longer pursuit. I can now leave with a good conscience, and have determined to go with you home, and there devote myself to the great work of my life. The knowledge, however, we have acquired during the last few weeks, I am sure, we will never regret."

"Our trouble and expense have not, indeed, been in vain," answered Mr. Petrovich. "How sublime the spectacle of those prairies! What boundless wealth of soil! We have beheld the granary of the world. Nor is anything in the west more wonderful than the size and beauty of the towns, which seem like growths of

magic. The marvels of the Yosemite, and the Yellowstone, and the Colorado, these exhaustless mines and grand mountains, to be comprehended must be seen. I must admit that the resources of the country are surpassed by its magnificence, and that it appears to be the crowning work of the Almighty in our world."

"I am, indeed, relieved," answered Nicolai, with a bright face, "to hear you say this, and was greatly afraid you would censure me for urging you forward. Yet, while I admire the country, my heart yearns for our dear Russia."

"Now I can comprehend," said Mr. Petrovich, "what seemed to me your excessive republican predilections. Possibly I have suffered my monarchical prejudices to color my judgments, and have expressed myself too severely. I confess I love the splendor and refinement which surround a throne, and that life here too often appears new and naked. But, on the other hand, I must remember that this land is the home of the nations. It is for the *people*, and what they lack in the delicacy and elegance peculiar to a court and an aristocracy, is more than returned to them in all the elements of substantial happiness."

"We now agree perfectly," replied Nicolai. "I could not have so well expressed my own opinions. And yet, with you, I prefer my own government and country."

"It is wonderful," interposed Mr. Petrovich, "how much mere physical endowment predisposes to favorable judgments. The mines, the prairies, and these sublime mountains have with me inclined the scale for

the grand republic. You cannot be in the land without glowing visions of a limitless future of blessing for our humanity."

"And what is most curious," said Nicolai, "is the tie binding the American Republic to the Russian Empire. Could forms of government be more different? Could social conditions be more widely separated? Could the extremes be greater as regards origin, history and development? Yet the two countries, united in a mysterious sympathy, must have some common mission and destiny."

While this conversation was progressing, Ling had wandered through the village almost in despair. Even *his* heart had begun to sink. Years before, in China, Mr. Petrovich had rescued him when drowning, and he had since been a trusted and enthusiastic servant, anxious to devote his life to his master. In the long pursuit his patience and courage had never before failed. His whole soul was concentrated in a success which would bring to his preserver the greatest happiness possible. The faithful giant passed sadly to the extremity of the town. A midnight was over him. He held down his head muttering as he walked through the valley of the shadow of his despair. Happening to raise his eyes he saw a lad sleeping under a tree. The feet of the boy were bare and lacerated, his face was pinched and thin, his clothing was in rags, but his long black eye-lashes, his dark hair, his soft and peculiar expression and rare oriental beauty, lent to him a resistless charm. Often, as he

slumbered, his lips would move, and then a gleam of light seemed to come out over his countenance like the moon through a cloud. Ling stopped, gazed, was bound by a spell to the spot. Slowly the giant got on his knees and continued to look. He was fascinated. Who was this strange boy? What had made him thus almost naked, tired and bleeding? And what in the heart of Ling awakened this overpowering interest? Many minutes passed. A half-hour was gone. Still the giant gazed and still the lad slept. Suddenly those black eyes are opened! A smile of recognition illuminated the face of Ling. Yes! he saw it all. The light has come. He was transported to the scene on the battery and in the house of Ruric, described in the first chapter of our story. Here before him is the object of his search. It is Tip!

The boy awakening, looked in the giant's face, and seeing there love and sympathy, exclaimed, in a low, faint voice:

"I am so sick and tired. Can you give me some food? Oh, get me a doctor. I am nearly dead. I have money in my belt and I can pay him and you."

"Monee no me wantee!" said the giant. "Me wantee you. You be Tippee."

"Yes," answered the boy, faintly, "that is my name. I am Tip, but I never saw you before."

"Don't talkee muchee!" replied Ling. "Me you soughtee longee, muchee, all over Mellika. Ah! foundee you!" and the giant uttered peals of joyful laughter from his glad heart.

When Ling could at last restrain himself he asked :

“Where from youee ?”

“I cannot tell you now,” said Tip, “I am too weak. Get me some food and medicine, and when I get better you shall know everything.”

The giant took the boy in his strong arms and folded him to his warm breast, and bore him through the village, and carried him to his own room, and laid him tenderly on his bed, and procured him nourishment, and bathed his wounds, and then went for a physician. Soon Tip, although yet weak, was refreshed and lying in a sweet and healthful slumber.

When the lad had received his care, Ling sought Mr. Petrovich and Nicolai in their apartments. Overflowing as he was with joy and triumph, he did not forget his oriental deference and politeness. But after his obeisance, the flood burst forth. His countenance was radiant and his very pigtail seemed to vibrate in sympathy with his heart.

“Me foundee him,” he exclaimed. “Me habee here him ! in thisee house ! here him ! here ! Me habbe.”

The giant leaped, danced, whirled, talked, gesticulated, until the gentlemen thought him a candidate for the lunatic asylum.

“What is the meaning of this ?” asked Mr. Petrovich, rather impatiently. “You seem crazy. Cannot you tell us what discoveries have made you mad ? Let us know at once !”

“Me foundee him,” answered the giant, with greater impetuosity than ever, “foundee ! foundee ! himsee.”

"But whom!" inquired Mr. Petrovich, with rising temper. "Be quiet and tell me whom you mean?"

His decided and displeased tone brought Ling to his senses, and he answered:

"Tippee, Tippee, Tippee, me foundee."

It was now in turn that the gentlemen were astonished.

"Tip!" they ejaculated together.

"Surely you dream, or have become a lunatic," said Mr. Petrovich.

"Where is he?" burst out Nicolai, in an ecstasy of surprise, and curiosity. "Tell us where he is."

Ling had now become completely restored, and answered:

"In thisee house he Tippee be! Me showee you him."

The giant went to the door, and through the hall and down the stairs to his room, followed by the gentlemen. There, indeed, on the bed was the sleeping boy, whom Mr. Petrovich had seen on the Battery in New York. Long they all stood and gazed in silence. What link was this in the mysterious chain of destiny! What toil, and time, and thought to bring them to this result! That slumbering lad, with his beautiful Indian face! What is the secret of his life? Can it be obtained from him? Was it to pass those lips? Or, was it to be forever sealed and hidden? Who could tell? Where is the girl? Is she lost? Is she dead? More horrible than all—is she in Ruric's power? While these inquiries were flashing through

the souls of the gazers, Tip opened his eyes, and was startled when he saw these strange men bending over him with a gaze so earnest. Very soon he remembered Mr. Petrovich as the gentleman with whom Ruric had the furious struggle.

"Oh, sir," he said, with difficulty and in a murmuring voice, "I am so glad to see you. I know you are my friend. I have something to say to you alone."

Mr. Petrovich at once requested Nicolai and Ling to withdraw, and was thus left with Tip. He took the boy's hand and said :

"Yes! I am, indeed, your friend, and will take care of you while you live. Tell me all that is in your mind."

"Oh, sir," burst out Tip, with quivering heart and overflowing eyes, "you must make haste. Lil is in great danger. If you do not go soon, she will be dead."

"Be calm, my boy," answered Mr. Petrovich, with assumed quietude of manner. "Do not exhaust yourself. All depends on you. Let me know where she is, and what will be necessary for her rescue."

"I will try," replied Tip, with great effort. "Ruric, Tojo, Lil and I were in this place not long since. Our master decided to take us to the Vale of Paradise, about a hundred miles from here, where he had bought a cottage. We went most of the way by rail and the rest on horses. When we got there, he told Lil that in a month he would marry her. She hates him, and she told me she would kill herself."

"Would kill herself!" exclaimed Mr. Petrovich, horrified. "Was she in earnest?"

"Oh, yes, sir," answered Tip. "She would do what she said, and rather die than marry Ruric. She told me that on the morning of the day she would throw herself over the precipice."

"But how was he to marry her?" inquired Mr. Petrovich, with increasing terror and anguish. "Where would he find a priest?"

"He said a priest was all humbug," replied the boy. "He wouldn't have him, if he could. He is to take Lil on the wedding morning out on the rock, and stand before the rising sun, and then they are to join hands and be man and wife."

Mr. Petrovich was aghast. He trembled with excitement. An abyss was, indeed, gaping beneath the feet of the girl. After great effort he inquired:

"On what day was this to be?"

Tip thought a moment and answered:

"Perhaps I have not kept my time right, but I think it will be just ten days from this."

"And what brought you here, my boy?" asked Mr. Petrovich.

"I knew," said Tip, "if help did not come, Lil would take her life, and to save it, I ran away to do what I could, but I got sick and weak and was lost on the mountains and this made me longer. But it is not too late yet. She can be saved. If you go at once, she can be saved."

Mr. Petrovich looked on the suffering little hero with

a heart full of love and admiration. At last he was able to inquire :

“Have you strength to guide us back? Could you find the way? All now depends on you.”

These words inspired Tip with a new life. His black eyes gleamed and sparkled with joy, and his features shone in a light which seemed scarcely of earth. He raised himself on his elbow and said:

“Yes, sir! I feel I will have strength given me. Lil is to me like a sister. I would do anything for her. I will start with you to-morrow, and show you, if it kills me.”

Mr. Petrovich shook the boy's hand, but was so overpowered that he could not speak for many minutes. He said at last :

“My lad, keep quiet. Get all the strength you can. I will leave you now, and will make every arrangement to deliver the girl from this fearful wretch who would destroy her.”

He withdrew from the room, and Tip sank back into a deep slumber.

Ling was in his element. His tact and energy were invaluable. Before the sun disappeared behind the mountains, he had secured two Indian guides, an escort of six stalwart men, a slight litter for Tip, to be carried by relays of the guards, and made arrangements for supplies of arms, provisions, and all other necessities for the fatiguing and perilous enterprise.

Early next day the march was commenced. Including Mr. Petrovich, Nicolai, Ling, and Tip, the party num-

bered twelve persons. Under the directions of the boy, they proceeded to the western extremity of the town, and then along a narrow valley to the steep side of a mountain, where they plunged into a pine-forest. For the first three days, the trail was made easy to the two Indian guides by the drops of blood which had fallen from the feet of Tip after his shoes had been worn out. Then the way became more difficult to find and to follow. Still, a fragment of the boy's clothing, a broken twig, a bruised leaf, a piece of paper purposely dropped, assisted by Tip's own quick memory and intelligence, made the party sure that they were in the right path. On the sixth day, when the toilsome journey was about two-thirds accomplished, the sick lad gave evident signs of exhaustion. His energies had expended themselves. His eyes seemed growing to an unnatural size, and to sparkle with an unearthly fire. His lips became pallid, and his cheeks sunken and ghastly. Early in the afternoon his feebleness compelled the party to halt for the night.

For several days, Nicolai had been constantly with Tip, and preparing his mind, by his priestly counsels, for the change he saw would be inevitable. As he bent over the litter, the dying boy opened his eyes and looked on his new friend with inexpressible gratitude. With his thin hands, he took the gold chain of the locket from his neck, and gazed long and earnestly on that mysterious face, at last asking :

“Sir, can you tell me in what language these words are written, and what they mean?”

Nicolai held the locket, examined it carefully, and answered :

"These are Arabic words, which spell the name Hyder Ali, who was a great Rajah or prince in India more than a century ago."

A flash of intelligence darted over the features of Tip. His lip quivered, and his whole frame became agitated.

"Oh, sir," he exclaimed, with deep emotion, "that word seems to unlock my memory. I see it all. He was my mother's grandfather. Now I can recollect our palace, the elephant on which I used to ride, our city, my rich dress, and all the beautiful things. Yes sir, I was a prince. But that is no matter now. Promise to bury this locket with me. When I am in my grave I want to feel that it is on my breast."

"My dear boy," answered Nicolai, "I do not doubt that you are right in your recollections of yourself. Many things conspire to prove it. I will most gladly do what you request. Your life will soon be over, and you must not regret what you have lost."

"Oh, no, no sir," whispered Tip, with a brightening eye and face; "I do not wish to live, even if I would be a prince in my own land, because I am tired, so tired, and I want to be at rest. And now I will ask one thing more. I always told Lil I would never be a Christian, but since talking with you, I feel differently. I believe in our Saviour and I want you to baptize me."

"Most gladly, my son," exclaimed Nicolai, bursting

into tears and unable longer to control his emotions. "I will make arrangements immediately. You have filled me with great joy."

"Oh, there; see there, sir," cried the boy in a low, clear, musical voice, while his face beamed with a celestial joy, as he pointed upwards; "it seems as if I was mounting to heaven like that bird."

As he spoke, he pointed to a mountain-eagle wheeling sunward on royal wing above the clouds.

Nicolai procured some pure water which sparkled from a spring, and called together the party to be witnesses of the baptism. The chrism of his Church he was compelled to omit. As he sprinkled the sacred drops on the brow of Tip in the name of the Trinity, an awful stillness was in all hearts, while the beautiful face of the boy appeared to shine in a halo, sweet and bright as heaven. Nicolai and Mr. Petrovich then solemnly chanted together the words of the *NUNC DEMITTAS*, whose music was lost amid the far echoes of the surprised mountains.

Tip now made a sign and the Priest bent over him.

"Oh, sir," he said, "have you a cross? I want to die looking on the cross! The cross. Oh, the cross, how I love it."

Nicolai opened his coat and took out from his bosom a large and splendid cross of gold, which he held before Tip, who gazed on the precious emblem with a saintly rapture. As he looked, a ray of the setting sun touched the holy sign with a sudden splendor

that appeared to penetrate the very soul of Tip. He whispered faintly.

“See! see! there is light on the cross! It makes my way bright to heaven! Good-by, sir! Good-by, all! Jesu! Jesu! Jesu!”

Last on the dear boy's lips was the name of the Saviour of mankind. His spirit breathed itself gently into Paradise, and his peaceful face showed that he was at rest. Nicolai closed his eyes and bathed him with his tears. Even the Indian guides and the rough guards wept as they gazed on the serene countenance illuminated by the lingering sun. Mr. Petrovich was filled with a grief like that of a father mourning over an only child. He and Nicolai watched all night by the side of Tip. Under his directions a grave was dug at the foot of a majestic pine, and above a stream which leaped and roared from the mountain-summit, then, just below, expanded into a smooth, crystal lake, discharging itself in a waterfall, whose white spray was painted with innumerable quivering brilliant rainbows, even now dancing in the morning sun. After an early breakfast, the body was carried by two of the guards, and, with a brief but solemn service by the Priest, was let down into its resting place. Nicolai laid the locket on the breast of Tip, and scattered over him some wild roses which breathed their fragrance through the air. The clods fell gently on the boy without the usual hollow sound produced by a coffin. A cross was planted at the head of the grave, which was covered with the greenest moss. There, amid those

gigantic mountains, standing around like monarch-sentinels robed in eternal verdure, and crowned with resplendent snows, will sleep Tip, until the trumpet of the angel of the resurrection shall cleave the rocks, and the dead, from land and sea, stand before the throne of the Judge of the earth.

The death of Tip greatly increased the difficulties of the party. His memory and his judgment often seemed almost supernatural. The anxiety of Mr. Petrovich rose into an agony, lest they might be delayed until the infamous marriage-rites, proposed by Ruric, should be consummated. Great drops of suffering would often start out upon his face. But under all disadvantages, progress was yet made. The directions of Tip had been clear and precise, and the traces of his trail had not wholly disappeared. Moreover, the sagacity of the Indian guides was wonderful, and finally conquered. On the ninth day—that before the abhorred nuptial ceremony, contemplated by the Nihilist—a marvelous scene burst on the party.

Before them spread the Vale of Paradise. Its entrance was a narrow gorge, bounded by perpendicular columned rocks nearly a mile in height, and from whose depths, at midday, could be seen the eternal stars. In one place, when the heavens were clear, the pole-star was always visible, and seemingly motionless in the dark, aerial blue. The valley was about one mile wide and six miles long. At its extreme end rose a pillared mountain, heaving its top into the clouds. On one side was a plunging cataract, involved in mists,

but whose thunders shook the rocks, while on the other side, the water falling over the summit of the lofty precipice, spread itself into a white spray, exquisite in its delicacy, and bent and waved to the winds, beautiful with myriads of rainbows. Sublime pines towered aloft from the encircling mountains. Down the valley, wound and glittered a stream between banks of grass and flowers, and marked along its course by the graceful willow and the gigantic sycamore.

The party remained for some moments absorbed by the beauty and grandeur of the spectacle. But soon before the minds of the two leaders rushed the tremendous questions:

“Where is Lillie? Where is Ruric? Can we discover them? Are we too late? Has the crime of the marriage been perpetrated? Are we here only to witness death and ruin?”

As the telescope swept the valley, the silence and suspense made all breathless, and the beat of anxious hearts could be distinctly heard. The instrument frequently so shook in the grasp of Mr. Petrovich, that he was compelled to give it to Nicolai, who, tremulous in turn, was forced to hand it back again. But, hark! a cry of joy! The telescope rests long on the same object! Mr. Petrovich exclaims, with beaming face:

“I have found it! The villain has, indeed, built his nest like the eagle on his crag, and carried afar his prey for its destruction, but I will pull him down from his height. I feel that Heaven has brought deliverance.”

Nicolai took the glass and gazed on the indicated spot. Yes! there was the cottage on a lofty rock, about the middle of the opposite mountain, partly concealed by leaves, and sometimes by the spray of the waterfall, yet sufficiently visible. It was known to the men as a house erected by a San Francisco speculator and misanthrope, and which was occupied by him until his suicide. Ruric had bought and repaired it, and as a new railway, unknown to Tip, came within a few miles, the place had been filled with every luxury, and rendered attractive and beautiful, amid that wonderful Vale of Paradise. Here the Nihilist was at the summit of his ambition and his revenge. His dream of years he thought would soon be realized. About him was the glory of art. He was in the smile of successful wealth. Beauty would soon be in his arms. The clouds had passed, and now the sunshine had crowned his head. Earth had for him the reward most coveted.

More than two hours elapsed before Mr. Petrovich and his party could move around the summits of those steep mountains and plant themselves on the ledge above the cottage. After a most toilsome effort, the wearisome circuit was accomplished, but the long shadows across the valley already told them of a sinking sun. Twilight would soon deepen and night render their enterprise unavailing. This reflection inspired them with fresh energy. They stood a moment in anxious consultation. Ling had withdrawn himself a short distance from the rest of the party, and was gazing intently down on the house below. Suddenly a lad sprang out

from behind a rock, and, quick as light, sheathed a dagger in his breast. The giant uttered a sharp cry, and grappled his assailant. An instant after, in their struggle, they fell together over the crags thousands of feet into the valley beneath, and lay side by side in mangled, bloody, ghastly ruin. Tojo had been watching in concealment the movements of the party, when Ling approached below him and sufficiently near for a mortal thrust. Recognizing his hereditary enemy, he could not resist the impulse of his passionate revenge. Tojo leaped on Ling like a young tiger, and killed himself in the murder of his foe.

The terrible fate of the affectionate and faithful giant cast a dark shadow over Mr. Petrovich and Nicolai. Indeed, the whole party stood aghast, as they witnessed the two men, after their brief struggle, tumbling over the rocky ledge, and falling through the air far down into the twilight of the deep valley. There was no time, however, to indulge sorrow. Years were now concentrated in a moment. The crisis had arrived. The next morning's sun would look down on that fearful mockery of a marriage.

While the two gentlemen were consulting, and quite undecided how to act, Ruric had witnessed the awful tragedy which we have described, and was seized with mortal fear. Looking aloft, he saw his pursuers, and his terror magnified their numbers. Mr. Petrovich, suddenly lifting his telescope to his eye, exclaimed :

“Heavens! I see the villain! He climbs, for life, down the side of the mountain. Despair is in his face.

He leaps from rock to rock like an Alpine goat. Mortal dread impels him. I fear he has murdered the girl."

Nicolai seized the glass and looked earnestly and tearfully at his brother. See! he has reached the bottom of his descent! Hark! the thunder of a horse's hoof! He flies! They see him, as if chased by demons, riding through the dark canon. Now he vanishes from view. The clang of hoofs has died away. Into all hearts comes the stillness of death.

Led, amid fearful forebodings, by Mr. Petrovich and Nicolai, the party climb down a rocky path, and after great perils reach the cottage without further serious accident. The front-door stands open. No person is visible. Halls, parlors, bedrooms, attic, closets are searched. All are unoccupied. One door had been passed by because locked. Mr. Petrovich knocks. There is no answer. His blows become louder. Everything is still. He rattles the lock, and one of the powerful guards tries to break a panel. At last a low voice, tremulous with fear, asks:

"Who are you? What do you want? If you are friends, I will let you in."

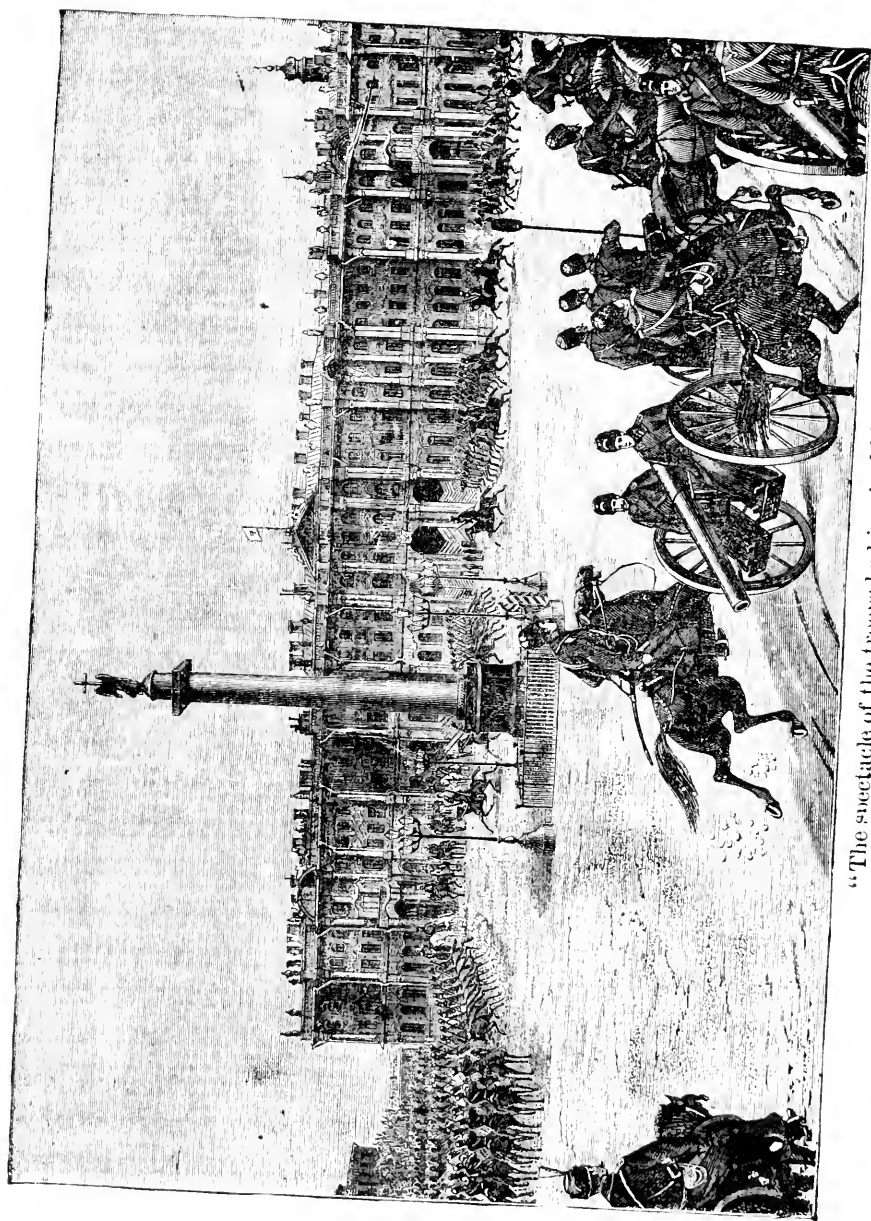
Here is relief at last. She lives. She can speak. She is heard moving across the floor.

Mr. Petrovich, for her encouragement, said:

"I am your best friend. You may remember me as the person who fought with Ruric for you that night in New York. You can trust me. I have been seeking you all over the country, and will be your protector for life."

The girl seemed to have paused in the midst of her resolution. Minutes passed before she could resume her efforts. Now her step is heard again. The bolt is withdrawn. Lillie stands before Mr. Petrovich!





"The spectacle of the troops had inspired him."
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CHAPTER XVI.

ST. PETERSBURG.



T was a winter morning in St. Petersburg. The first beams of the sun were burning and dancing around the dome of St. Isaac's whose cross, sparkling with frost-crystals, seemed on the sky a blaze of diamonds. An avalanche of snow was on the Winter Palace. The great Capital was white in its December robe. Frozen from bank to bank, the existence of the Neva could scarcely be conceived beneath its concealing snow. Winter ruled sovereign of northern Russia.

At the early hour of which we speak, the currents of the city's life appeared to be congealed. Here and there could be seen a policeman wearied with his night-watch, a peasant in his rough sheep-skin, or an aristocratic reveller returning late from his debauch. Suddenly, through the sharp, clear air, can be heard the tinkle of bells, the gliding of runners, the trampling of horses in the muffling snow, and, as the noise grows louder, a gay sleigh dashes before the Marble Palace near

the famous bridge. Two gentlemen of unusual size emerge from the front door of the royal edifice, but, having their faces hid in their furs, cannot be recognized. Seating themselves, and adjusting their gloves, capes, and robes, at the crack of the driver's whip, the three horses, harnessed abreast, start into a gallop, flying over the hard-frozen surface of the snow, their furious speed well emblemized by a golden eagle spreading its wings over the front of the sleigh, as if to assist its progress.

"Bishop," began the gentleman on the right, first breaking the silence, "I think that bird shows that your republican peculiarities still follow you. The eagle, I fear, is still preferred to the bear."

"A mere accident, I assure you, Prince Romanoff," replied the ecclesiastic, slightly embarrassed. "The republic is with me only a memory, and my single aim is to use the lessons learned there for the good of Russia."

"Excuse my jest, my friend," answered the gentleman. "I appreciate both your patriotic devotion and your religious enthusiasm. No man could be more gratified that my old friend Nicolai, through the generosity of our Imperial Master, is Bishop of Novgorod. He must, indeed, have been pleased with your interview, the report of your observations and your plans for the future."

"Nor am I less delighted," said the Bishop, "that my traveling companion, Mr. Petrovich, has taken his hereditary place as nephew of the Czar, and one of the

royal princes of the Russian Empire, and is soon to be appointed Counsellor to his Majesty."

"To you it must be especially pleasing," returned the Prince, "that the delicacy of the Emperor has selected your diocese in the very land of your fathers. The ancient Russikoffs were once the kings of Novgorod."

"Yes, your Highness," answered the Bishop; "our ancestor, Ruric, was monarch of that region a thousand years ago, so that royal blood flows in the veins of my brother and myself. Oh, that he yet might be made worthy of his hereditary rank and descent. While twins, he is my senior by birth and the representative of our house."

"I have something of interest to disclose to you about Ruric," said the Prince, "but must now wait until this expedition is over. In a few hours will be settled the future of my line. One link alone is wanting in the chain of evidence to prove that Lillie is my daughter — my long-lost Marie Petrovich Alexandra Romanoff — the heiress of my name and my estates, and a member of the imperial family. In my heart I feel that she is, indeed, my child; but I am sure that I have been right in restraining myself and deferring her acknowledgment until the proofs were such as our tribunals would sustain."

"You have, truly," answered Bishop Nicolai, "exhibited the most admirable and extraordinary control, which, I am persuaded, was wise and best. Heaven will complete our work. Our toils and perils have not been in

vain. When all has been accomplished, how rich, how lasting, how splendid will be our reward!"

After this conversation the gentlemen relapsed into silence, absorbed in their thoughts. Wonderful, indeed, had been the path they had traveled! Yet, at last, here are our former friends, Mr. Petrovich and Nicolai, in their true characters. The masks have dropped. We see them both in their native light. But they are on the same mission in the Empire they had pursued in the Republic. Still it is their task to identify Lillie,—not now, however, working in the darkness, but, as they hope, emerging into the sunlight of a glorious success.

By frequent relays of horses the swift sleigh in ten hours, accomplished a hundred miles. The full moon is rising over a forest of the east, and tracing dark shadows of trees on the sparkling brilliance of the crystal snow. She looks down with a benignant eye. The stars in their winter brightness fling from the clear heavens their benedictions on the path of the illustrious travelers.

About six o'clock in the evening, the sleigh halted before the mansion of a Russian gentleman, Pavel Vassolich, whose ancestors for generations had cultivated the estate. Immediately there was an immense barking of dogs. Lights glanced hurriedly across the windows. A servant crept around in the shadow to observe. The arrival had already produced intense commotion in the sleepy old dwelling. Assisted by two footmen, the Prince and the Bishop descended from

the sleigh, and, opening the huge gate, advanced together to the mansion. When they reached the steps, they found Pavel Vassolich before his front door. He had evidently expected his distinguished guests, and dared the winter cold to express himself honored by their visit. Their welcome was most cordial. Entering, they were presented to Anna Vassolich, wife of their host, and the only member of the family beside himself at home, the two sons being absent in the army.

The mansion was heated by furnaces, but a vast fire blazed in the wide chimney of the parlor. After a short conversation, the guests retired to their bedrooms, and, reappearing, were conducted to the dining-table, loaded in the Russian style of prodigal rural hospitality. Generous wines followed the repast, and then the pipe-boy presented long Turkish Meerschaums, carved and arranged in the true oriental style, and filled with the best tobacco. While the three gentlemen were indulging thus luxuriously, and the smoke was ascending in clouds illuminated by the blaze of the fire and circling around the lamps, the Prince led the conversation to the object of his visit.

"May I inquire," he began, "how the serfs behaved after the emancipation in your district?"

"Strangely enough, your Highness," answered his host, slightly voluble with the wine, "my rascals were not contented with the title to half my estate. By virtue of some peasant tradition, they actually claimed the whole, and clamored because the Law would not give them their right. Under the old order of things

we would have stopped their insolence with the whip, but by a little management our difficulties were adjusted. Now we have perfect quiet, and the half of my estate yields as much as the whole formerly produced, estimating the various dues paid me by the Commune."

"Do the serfs prize their liberty?" asked the Bishop. "I have heard that they are less sober and industrious than previous to the Emancipation."

"Liberty!" exclaimed Pavel Vassolich, with a laugh and a sneer; "liberty indeed! What care peasants for liberty? A good home, good food, good clothes, good land, and plenty to drink, and time for their fête days—these are all the liberty they want. Give them these and you may make them, or call them slaves, or what you will. I think they drink more and idle more than before the Emancipation, but, after all, they cultivate their land well. You know in the Commune they settle when to plough, and sow and harvest and sell, and these discussions have made them become more intelligent with their increased interest and responsibility."

"And what has been the effect in your neighborhood of the other great privileges granted by his Majesty?" again inquired the Prince.

"The trial by jury," said Pavel Vassolich, "if sometimes interfered with by the Emperor's Gendarmerie, has still proved a blessing, and the Zemstvo, where peasant and nobleman consult together, is a great social bond. In these reforms I behold a grand future for Russia. I

was a violent enemy to them all, and especially to the Emancipation, but after twenty years' experience, and allowing for all frictions and disappointments, I believe that our Emperor, in the after generations, will be styled the Saviour of his country."

"I am glad to hear you say so," exclaimed the Prince, with the utmost animation. "This opinion, from a man of your position and influence, will be a great comfort to his Majesty, and, Heaven knows, he needs all the encouragement possible. Gloom in himself, curses from others, have been the rewards of his noble work."

"In my view," said the Bishop, "the real sufferers have been the nobles. They have transferred to the Commune the titles to more than half their lands, and when oppressed by mortgages and other encumbrances, they have invariably sunk into bankruptcy, despair, and final ruin."

"Yes," replied the Prince, "and it is the discontent of the nobles which supplies the ranks of the Nihilists, and fills Russia with blood and terror. But, think of the grand achievement! The serfs of the State, and of the nobility together, numbered nearly fifty millions. What measure in the world's history ever reached to the magnitude of Alexander's Emancipation? In the end, it will stand forth like an old pyramid, crowned with the flame of heaven and strong in the guardianship of the Almighty Power. The Emperor, on its summit, will be the Colossus of Beneficence in the coming history of humanity."

"Possibly," resumed Pavel Vassolich, "I have grown into a better opinion of the measure than others, because of my unexpected success, which has been mostly due to a peasant, Peter Ivanovich, a village Elder and the Oracle of the Commune."

"Ah!" exclaimed the Prince, with a brightening eye and face, "that name recalls the object of my visit. Peter Ivanovich is the very man I wish to see, and inquire about his old mother, Katrine. Does she yet live?"

"I am glad, your Highness," answered the host, "to be able to say that she does. She is a worthy mother of a worthy son, and we do all possible for her comfort. But she is now a sad fragment of herself. Not only is she extremely feeble, but blind, deaf, and we fear dumb, since, she has not spoken a single word for a year."

"Can you so arrange it to-morrow morning that the Bishop and myself can see her alone, at the home of her son?"

"Certainly, your Highness," replied the host, "and with the greatest pleasure."

After these words, the gentlemen said good-night, and retired to their apartments. Having arisen and dispatched a substantial breakfast, they proceeded to the house of Peter Ivanovich, the village Elder and the Kozain, or Big One of his own family. The house was one of those low, irregular log constructions, usually inhabited by the Russian peasant, and its Head, with his large, blue eyes, high forehead and regular

features, his fair beard, his long, light-flowing hair parted in the middle, presented a reverend appearance corresponding to his position in the Commune, and in his own home. In his face were imperturbable gravity and composure. Nor was his sheep-skin coat ungraceful. He welcomed his distinguished guests with a low obeisance, but in his manner was neither impudence nor servility. Rather, he stood forth with the modest independence of a man.

The Prince at once entered on his business, asking :

“Are you Peter, the son of Katrine Ivanovich?”

“I am, your Highness,” answered the Kozain, with a slight inclination of his person.

“Was she once nurse in the family of Prince Alexis Romanoff?”

“She was, for many years, your Highness,” said the Elder.

“Did she accompany his family to Paris, and how many years since?” continued the Prince.

“She went there first, your Highness, about fifteen years ago, and remained in that city about five years. She was the nurse of his only child, Marie.”

The Prince became agitated as he pursued his examination.

“When did she leave his service?” he inquired, with visible anxiety.

“About ten years since. The child was lost while under her care in Paris, and she was sent back here in disgrace.”

“Has she lived with you ever since?”

"She has, your Highness. But grief weighed upon her. She sank gradually into a sad and helpless state, becoming first deaf, then blind, and now we fear dumb."

"Do you think it would be possible to learn from her the particulars of the loss of the child?"

"I do not, Your Highness; but you can see her and I will help you all I can."

"Lead the way! We will make the attempt," answered the Prince.

They entered the house. Katrine sat before them knitting a long stocking. She was a tall, thin, erect woman, unlike a northern Russian, her hair being black as night, and unsnowed by age and sorrow; it hung in wild ringlets about her neck, giving her a most startling appearance. Long dark lashes shaded her sightless eyes. Her face was wrinkled, sunken, and attenuated, and over it the shadow of woe. Bony and busy fingers plied their task with ceaseless rapidity and accuracy, although for years no ray had entered those blind balls in their cavernous depths. The nose of Katrine was high and beaked, her cheekbones prominent, and by some caprice of nature she belonged to a type native to a distant soil. When the party entered she sat unmoved. Evidently her sealed senses gave no intimation of any presence other than her own.

Peter Vassolich first shouted in his mother's ear, then shook her arm, and used every conceivable expedient to arouse her from her lethargy. When she

felt his hand she lifted her face in a sort of dumb importunity, and then plied her fingers faster than ever, as if to redeem the time she had lost. Her whole soul was in the stocking she was working. An half hour passed. Her son could make no impression, and at last withdrew from the room in despair.

As if inspired by Heaven, a happy thought flashed over the Prince. He planted himself before the woman and said, in his old tone and manner:

“Katrine!”

It seemed like the voice of life itself penetrating the grave and reanimating the dead. The poor creature raised her head, and rolled round her blind eyes in mingled fear and wonder.

Now, in a voice slightly louder, the Prince called again—“Katrine.”

She rose to her feet. Her breathing became thick and fast. A new vigor was in her body, which swayed to and fro with her agitation. She turned her face as if listening for the familiar sound again. Her features began to assume a look of intelligence.

A third time and with an increasing emphasis the Prince cried “Katrine.”

At last the woman stood before them transformed and illuminated. Light seemed to shine from her and about her. No time was to be lost. Another moment might sink her back into her old apathy. Here was the opportunity granted by Heaven.

“Katrine, answer me,” said the Prince, as simply and naturally as possible.

She replied in excellent French, just as she would have done when in the service of her master in Paris :

“May it please your Highness, what do you want?”

“I wish you,” resumed the Prince, “to tell me all about my little lost Marie.”

The woman uttered a shrill shriek which pierced the ears and hearts of those who heard her. She fell then on the floor, and foamed and writhed as if under the power of demoniacal possession. When the fearful fit was over, she arose and stood with the most perfect composure.

As if nothing had happened, the Prince inquired :

“When Marie was lost did she have a locket round her neck?”

“Katrine replied with her old obeisance, and with entire calmness and distinctness :

“Her mother, your Highness, gave her a locket with your likeness in it and her own.”

“Was each set in pearls with a diamond at the top?”

“Yes, your Highness,” she answered, “and hung round her neck with a chain of gold clasped by a ruby.”

“What words were on it?”

“*Ma petite fille!*” was the instant reply.

“Why did I not know she had such a locket?”

“Because, your Highness, it came from the jewelers just before we went to the Bois de Bologne, and my lady, the Princess, would have shown it to you on

our return—if—if,” and she paused, gazing around her with a look of indescribable terror and suffering.

“If what?” pressed the Prince, in an agony of suspense, intense as her own alarm. “Tell me the whole, fully and honestly.”

She was still as a statue, except that her features were working in mortal dread.

“Tell me, woman,” cried the Prince, sternly, almost savagely; “tell me how my child was lost.”

These words loosed the tempest. All hell seemed raging in that wretched breast, as Katrine shrieked:

“Lost! Lost! She was not lost! Oh, my sin, my crime! This has bowed my head, crushed my heart, blasted my life. I have been deaf, dumb, blind, smitten by God Himself. I lied to you. Had I told the truth, Marie might have been saved. I was afraid. Hell must be mine. My little Marie was not lost, she was stolen.”

“Stolen!” exclaimed the Prince, fiercely. “Stolen by whom?”

“By Prince Ruric,” said the woman, with sobs and a wild stare. “He took Marie in his arms, and put a pistol to my ear, and swore he would kill me if I told. Oh, he looked, your Highness, so fierce and frenzied! I see him now,” she cried, placing her hands before her darkened balls, as if to shut out the frightful vision. “His eye glares, and his face scares me! I dared not tell you the truth, even to save my Marie. Oh! my sin. I have confessed. A Priest! A Priest! Absolve me! Save me.”

With these ejaculations, Katrine sank on her knees, raised her blind orbs to heaven, and stretched upwards her hands, pleading for forgiveness.

Bishop Nicolai now advanced and explained to her that he was a Priest, and after a few words of solemn instruction, pronounced over her the Absolution of the Holy Orthodox Church.

Instantly peace entered her soul and breathed from her features. It was the calm after the tempest. Katrine arose from her knees, sat down in her chair, resumed her knitting, and sank back into her old lethargy, ever afterwards insensible to events around her.

Bishop Nicolai having completed on the spot a record of what the woman said and did, he and the Prince bade farewell to Peter Ivanovich, who received more roubles than the Commune ever paid him during a whole year.

The chain of evidence was complete. Ruric, after his escape from Siberia, had wandered out of Russia into Germany, insane with his sufferings, had passed through Switzerland, he knew not how, and then, in a mad thirst for blood, had proceeded to Paris, where he knew from the papers Prince Alexis was residing, and who, as nephew of the Czar, he burned to kill. When watching about the Avenue Bois de Bologne, he had seen Katrine and little Marie come from the house and go to the Bois. He followed them, and, with a flash of demoniacal instinct, saw that he could inflict a pang keener than death. He would rob the parents

of their idol, and devote her to himself in a foreign land, and revel in a woe which would end only in the grave. Obeying this impulse of hell, Ruric snatched the child, threatened the nurse in the frightful manner she described, and made his way eventually to New York. At last, from the grave of an accursed breast, had been wrung its blasting secret, and the rescued girl would now arise to her true place in life.

Having expressed their thanks and said farewell to their host and his wife, the Prince and the Bishop flew back over the crystal snow to the capital. His Highness would entrust to no other the sacred communication to his daughter. With the confession of Katrine he hastened over the wintry ocean to America.

Nearly twenty years before this time, Admiral Stewart, by the order of his Government, had spent a year in St. Petersburg, and his wife had been an enthusiasm in the city and the Court. They had especially become intimate with the Prince and Princess Romanoff. After the discovery of his daughter, until the proofs of her identity were legally complete, Mrs. Stewart was requested to receive Marie into her household. That lady at first objected, chiefly on account of the presence of her son. The Prince laughed at the scruple, saying, that Russian royalty might do worse than recruit its ranks from republican kings. Mrs. Stewart yielded against her judgment. The girl was provided with the best private teachers, and, under the influence of a refined home, bloomed into the beauty of an ideal

womanhood. She was such a creature as any father might adore.

Who can describe the joy in those two breasts, when the acknowledgment of the sacred tie was made? What sobs and tears! What smiles of gratitude and love! What words and looks and endearments! It was a moment of almost celestial bliss. A new world of the affections was opened in those souls. The past melted away. Hereafter, the father and the daughter were as if they had never been apart. But, as the time of her departure drew near, a cloud was observed on the Princess. The fears of the father were excited. It was not long before he had the embarrassing secret.

One day, the Prince said, smilingly, to Mrs. Stewart:

“Madam, the maternal instinct is infallible.”

“Ah! your Highness,” answered Mrs. Stewart, “you then acknowledge it to be so. I fear your confession comes too late.”

“That depends on you, madam, and your esteemed son,” replied the Prince, gravely.

“I had a clear prescience of the result, and put your Highness on your guard,” answered Mrs. Stewart, with dignity.

“I have only myself to blame, and I will not fear the consequences if you will accede to my terms,” said the Prince.

“Surely, surely,” exclaimed Mrs. Stewart, “my son has not abused his position and violated his honor by ensnaring the affections of your daughter. He is too noble for that. It is impossible.”

"Not at all," answered the Prince, "the tendrils of the young heart unconsciously clung to the first object, and it proved a worthy one. No words have ever passed between your son and my daughter. Love, like a flower, has grown in the silence, and is fully matured. The soul of my Marie lives in that of your Frank."

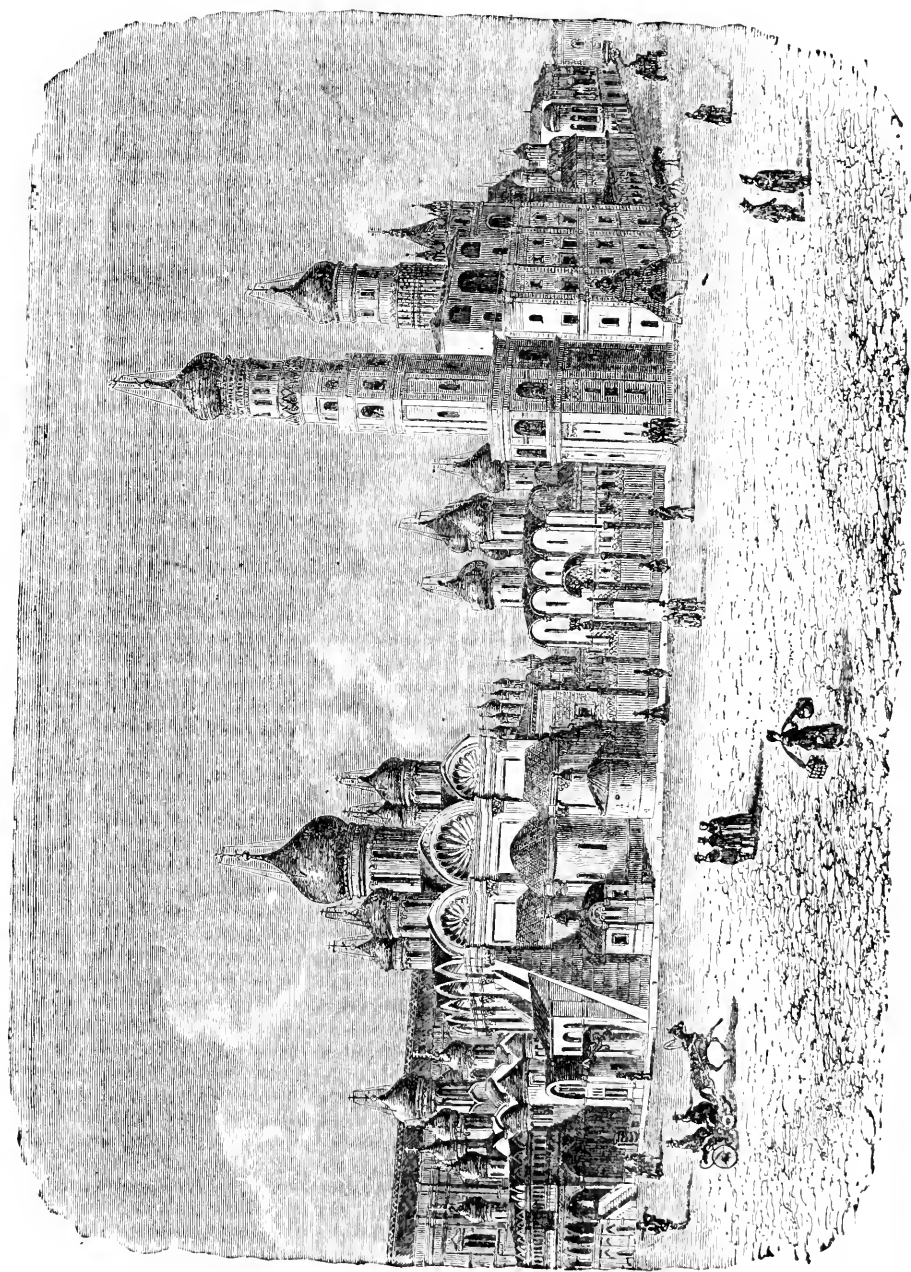
"And I am just as certain," replied Mrs. Stewart, gaily, "that the soul of my Frank lives in that of your Marie."

"We dare not separate them," said the Prince, "it would be too cruel. It would kill my child. Yes, my sweet flower would die. What remains? My Marie cannot remain here. The Czar, my uncle, could never permit it. But your son could come to Russia. Only, however, I know, if you will accompany him. He will never leave you behind. Oh, the difficulties are too many. I fear that you will never leave your country."

Mrs. Stewart undertook to remove the obstacles, and she succeeded. Edward had become President of the Railroad, and had bought and occupied the mansion of General Sparker, having added to his grounds those of Bidman. He was thus on the summit of his profession and his ambition. But he saw a grand career in Russia. His quick glance perceived how useful he could be in that vast and splendid empire, and his head soon followed his heart. The struggle to renounce his country was sometimes intense, but to abandon Marie was even more agonizing. The Prince promised to appoint him Grand Controller of the Railways of the empire,

and assured him that the Czar would confer a title and estate, corresponding to his own rank and name, as a member of the imperial family. Mrs. Stewart would not withhold her assent, and agreed to accompany her son, who also secured in advance for his friend, John Standfast, the Mastership of the Railway workshops of Russia.

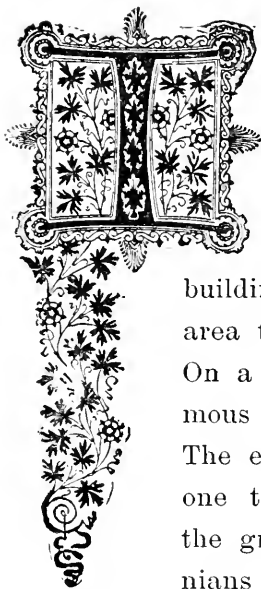
The terms thus adjusted, and their arrangements made, the joyful party sailed for St. Petersburg, and in less than three weeks were entering the Neva in a small steamer which took them from their splendid government vessel. It was the morning of the last day of May. Stewart stood alone on the bow of the swift little vessel. His reflections were overwhelming, in view of what he had left behind, and of his splendid prospects in the future. Before him, as the Neva narrowed, was the capital of Russia, sitting like a queen between the immensities of the sea and of the sky, and wearing on her brow, as a crown, the gold of the dome of St. Isaac's, now outlined in its majesty on the purple of a morning cloud. The four bell-towers formed a royal tiara. See! there the Admiralty lifts its arrowy spire glittering into heaven! Now in their superb curves stand aloft the oriental domes of the Muscovite St. Michael's the Archangel! Pyramids and crosses gleam and flash in the morning sun! The Winter Palace lifts itself almost with the grandeur of a mountain! Scarcely in the world could Stewart have beheld a more splendid and impressive spectacle.



The Palace of the Czars.
Page 585.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE PALACE OF THE CZARS.



IN the midst of the old town of Novgorod is an open space. On the right stands the cathedral and the archiepiscopal palace, and to the left are the long government buildings. Precisely in the center of the area towers a curious colossal monument. On a massive stone pedestal rests an enormous globe covered with mystic figures. The eccentric structure commemorates the one thousandth birthday of Russia, and the great national fact that the Slavonians called from the tribe Rus, to be their king, Ruric who long ruled Novgorod. Centuries after his reign came Ivan the Terrible with chain and torch and sword. The Muscovite Czar laid a hand of blood and iron on the venerable city. Monks and priests were bound and flogged until they bought themselves from torture. Officers and merchants were given to the fire; their wives and children hurled into the water, where soldiers in boats killed those attempting to escape. A bubbling below the bridge, in the

popular tradition, now indicates where the spirits of the murdered are still struggling for deliverance.

The descendants of the old Novgorod Ruric were the Russikoffs, who were kings long before the Romanoffs were Czars. After the destruction we have described, some of the former family rose into wealth and power, but always with an open or secret hostility to the tyrants of their ancestors. One in the reign of Catharine erected a stately palace on the great Nevsky Prospekt, which, during the early part of the present century had been sold, and now, within a few months, purchased and occupied by a reputed American gentleman, whose vast wealth, splendorous appearance, and elegant accomplishments, made him the most conspicuous figure in the capital of the Empire.

If, at eight o'clock on a certain evening, we had entered a secret room of the Russikoff palace, we would have discovered the name of this dashing and admired republican. He is sitting in an elevated chair at the head of a large table, with two persons on either side, who appear to form a committee over which he presides. Surely he is an old acquaintance! His face and voice seem familiar! Yes! It is Ruric! He is shaven, and there are some attempts at disguise, but we cannot long doubt his identity. He is now chief of the Nihilistic Executive Committee of the Russian Empire. At this moment he is plotting the death of the Czar! Is it hereditary hate? Is it the spirit of his ancestor, the old Ruric, flaming now in the breast of his namesake and descendant? Is he, after

centuries, to be the avenging angel of his house? The blood shed on that cruel day in Novgorod by the muscovite Ivan! Is it crying from the ground? Will the nineteenth century avenge the sixteenth? Is the spot of murder still on the house of the Czar? Can all this torture of an imperial family be the curse of a vengeance transmitted from the crime of their progenitor? Deep, true, long, sure, terrible is the retribution of Heaven!

The discussion had been intense and protracted, and we will intrude ourselves at its close. Ruric said, "We must now terminate our debate, and have the report of the Grand Treasurer."

Karl Grenofskil replied:

"We are receiving money from all classes of the empire—peasants and noblemen contribute alike. Indeed, supplies flow into our treasury from every part of the world. After paying all our expenses we will have left nearly a half million of roubles."

"Satisfactory, indeed!" cried Ruric, with delight. "Money is the test of devotion, and, measured by that standard, never was a consecration more complete. Our Grand Secretary will now inform us if there is anything new in his department."

"Nothing," replied Victor Sobieski, "necessary to communicate in detail. I am receiving letters from every district of the empire and every region of the globe. They breathe and burn with encouragement. Even learned men give us cheer. Recently at a commencement of the greatest university in America its greatest

orator surpassed himself in his eloquent approval of our principles and our practice."

"I know him well," replied Ruric, "and I have his private letters which inspire me with courage and with confidence. He is more valuable than tons of dynamite, and equally as explosive, and unconscious of his destructive power. Indeed he is sublime, both in moral virtue and intellectual force, and is the greatest accession Nihilism has yet received. Now, more important than all, will the Duke, our Grand Inspector, give us his report?"

"I can only," responded Vlademir Yaroslav, "say, that I have just finished a tour of the empire. Everywhere men, women, even children, bade me welcome. Nobles are more enthusiastic than peasants. I shall soon commence my voyage of inspection over the world. Nihilism in all lands will stand one compact phalanx against the throne of the Czar. Mankind cries death to tyrants!"

"Better and better," said Ruric, in an ecstasy. "Most interesting of all, I call on our Grand Recorder for her address."

Sophie Petrovna, a girl of eighteen, and a Princess of the Empire, remarkable for beauty and genius, read, in a clear, musical voice, the following:

"Awake, Russia! Devoured, oppressed, awake! Shake off thy yoke! Death to the spy and to the soldier! Too long have you been under this Tartar Khan! Tell him now that the throne of the Czar is not the altar of God! Stand fearless before the des-

pot! Call him to account for his exiles, his imprisonments, his tortures, his bloody wars, ceaseless taxations, interminable tyrannies! Say to him, you have fettered the Press, degraded the University, plundered the Peasant, outraged the Noble, chained Freedom, banished Peace, murdered Truth itself! The hour has come for Vengeance! Czar, thou hast been weighed and found wanting! No longer shalt thou live! Thy people demand thy blood! Justice will have it! A million lives are pledged for thy death! Thy family shall perish! Our Victory is secure! Russia shall live, and the ages bless Nihilism!"

"Perfect!" "Admirable!" "Wonderful!" "An Inspiration!" were repeated on all sides. The woman stood, with flashing eye and quivering nostril, like a young Pythoness who has just from her tripod delivered the oracle of fate.

"Now," resumed Ruric, "I must make my own report. It regards our preparations in this palace of my ancestors. I have supervised and assisted the labor. All the vaults and cellars are filled with the excavations. The passage from this house under the avenue is finished, the dynamite is stored, the batteries are complete, and we only wait for the Czar to drive over, when a touch of the wires will close the circuit, and explode him to fragments. This final work and its peril I reserve for myself. We only want a person who, on the glorious day, will dare mount and drive the carriage of the Emperor over the fatal place, and by a wave of the hand indicate that the imperial vic-

tim is within. The keeper of the royal stables is a Nihilist, and will employ whomsoever we designate. Death and glory are the rewards of the work. No man yet has been found who is willing to perish for the destruction of the tyrant."

A dreadful silence followed these words. Each of the four members of the Committee was expected by Ruric to be ready, like himself, for the sacrifice. All seemed appalled. The stillness grew oppressive. One daring soul was only waiting until it was evident there would be no competitors. This assured, a woman's voice broke the embarrassing silence. The youthful Princess Petrovna, exclaimed :

"I will undertake the task! It is mine. I am the favored of fate. By these hands shall the tyrant be driven to his death, and Russia be made free. Thus will I deliver my country and immortalize myself."

This offer excited the most rapturous applause. The men embraced the woman, and kissed her in their fond admiration. Seating her there as on a throne they knelt around her in a circle, and adored her as a divinity. Always when Atheism renounces God it worships woman.

On the very night of this conspiracy, there was a Costume Ball at the Winter Palace. The era of the Great Ivan was to be represented. All the performers were assembled in the immense hall and waiting in a light so dim that they could not discern each other. Suddenly a line of flame flashes around the walls! The gigantic candelabras are in a blaze! Light floods the

place! The floor and marble pillars dazzle the eyes! More brilliant than day is the magic illumination! And what a burst of magnificence! Gold! Purple! Crimson! A sea of gorgeous colors, splendid costumes, flashing and sparkling jewels! The rank, the wealth, the glory of the greatest empire of the world! Earth could show no more brilliant and impressive spectacle.

Seated on his throne in the center of the hall is the Emperor himself in the royal robes of the Great Ivan. Most gracefully they depend from his shoulders! His noble features are classic in their regularity, and his posture has the majesty of a divinity. In his hands is his scepter. On his brow, blazing with diamonds, is the imperial crown, which circled the head of Ivan the Terrible.

Standing on the right of the Emperor, also in royal costume, is the Czarowitch, a noble figure, and his wife, the Princess Dagmar, sitting in a gilded arm-chair, behind which, is a sheaf of white and red camelias, while around, as a guard, stand ten Mamelukes, with their rich oriental turbans, twisted with gold, and their ample trousers girt with crimson cashmere scarfs.

Who stands opposite the Emperor with folded arms and lofty brow, a personage in stature and in attitude as commanding as the Imperial Sovereign himself? It is Ruric, in the costume of his ancestors, the Kings of Novgorod. He looks, in his fierce and proud dignity, like the avenger of his race.

With the burst of the music begins the polonaise. Splendid is the procession round the vast hall. First

the Emperor Alexander, leads the Princess Dagmar on his arm, followed by the Czarowitch, supporting his cousin, Marie Romanoff. Her father follows side by side with Ruric, who, in the rush and inspiration of the moment, is forgetful of his peril; and then come in their order, Dukes and Counts, and interminable nobles and gentlemen. All the hereditary aristocratic proclivities of the Nihilist rush back upon him. He is intoxicated and whirls in the dance, and utters the gay compliment and the bright repartee, and is, above all present, conspicuous for the nobleness of his face and person, the elegance of his bearing, and his refined and courtly gallantry. Without a flush of the cheek, or a quickening from his heart, he dares look into the eyes of the Majesty of Russia. Yes! he stands face to face before the man whom he has sworn to blow into fragments, and whose family and throne he would obliterate.

As the Nihilist passed out from the gay and splendid assemblage, he felt, in a secluded passage, a tap on his shoulder. He was a prisoner. From the moment he entered the capital he had been marked, and pursued, and all his plans and movements reported by the Gendermerie. The proofs were overwhelming. A formal tribunal was not necessary. The Nihilist was hurried to a distant apartment of the palace, seized and bound with his back to the table. Then followed an hour of intense silence and terrible suspense. Around was a dismal twilight-gloom in fearful contrast with the brilliance he had left. The heart of Ruric stood still. Over him came the shadow of a woe, whose mys-

tery he could not yet penetrate. His foreboding was worse than any possible reality it might indicate. Hark! a click! a flash! a sharp pain in his eyes! a quiver through his body! he utters a yell, fearful as the death-cry of a horse in battle; a loud, clear, terrible outburst of horror and despair. It seemed a wail of a demon of hell. The chords are cut. Ruric is lifted from the table to the floor. Just before the electric flash, the room had been filled suddenly with dazzling light. Has it been extinguished? It is a midnight around the Nihilist now. He does not yet understand it. Strange, no ray penetrates his gloom. Silence and darkness reign together. Now he comprehends it. He is blind. The spark has blasted his eyes forever. He will never again see himself, nor the earth, nor the sun. Night, night, night—always and everywhere! It is not now the prison, the mine, the block from which he may escape. Nor is it the rest of the grave. He is to be ever a sightless beggar. As he realized this dark and fearful future, Ruric fell to the floor as dead. A great horror is on him. He remains insensible for hours. At last he revives. He arises. He gropes round the room, and feels for the door. He creeps down the stairs. He is on the street. The breath of heaven is on his face but only to chill him into increased horror. Where shall he go? What shall he do? Who will have pity on him? There is no sun in the sky, and no hope in his heart. His punishment is greater than he can bear. Solitude becomes intolerable, and darkness insupportable. Tears continually rain from his blind

eyes. He is hungry and must beg. But the boys pelt him, and the dogs bark at him, and he is driven away, because on his breast, in staring letters, is the word—*Nihilist*. Pale, hungry, emaciated, he wanders about for days, until his reason begins to reel. When, at the last extremity, nature is exhausted, and he prays for death, he feels himself clasped to a warm and friendly breast. Ruric is in the arms of his brother Nicolai.





“Never had Alexander looked more like himself.”
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CHAPTER XVIII.

THE EMPEROR OF RUSSIA.



ON the Nevská Prospekt, near the Fontanka Canal, stands the Imperial Palace, preferred by the Emperor Nicholas for his residence. It was in one of its exquisite little reception-rooms, fronting the Grand Avenue, and commanding a noble view of the city, that Prince Alexis was to meet his uncle, the Czar. Since the return of the nephew, there had been no really satisfactory interview, and in this it was expected that the confidence would be full and mutual. Owing to a slight error in his watch, the Prince was a few minutes too early. Thus it happened that the Emperor, returning from a review of troops, chanced to see his nephew by a passing glance, and entered the room without ceremony. Affection and pleasure beamed from his face. The Prince arose, knelt before him, kissed his extended hand, and then was lifted up by his uncle and pressed to his breast by a long and warm embrace.

Never had Alexander looked more like himself. His

usual look of gloom had vanished. The spectacle of the troops had inspired him, and the keen air had brought back to his cheeks the glow of his youth. He wore his military uniform, and most noticeably the high, massive, old-fashioned epaulettes of gold. Over his right shoulder, and down across his breast, was a splendid crimson scarf, and around his waist a rich sash of a darker hue. The collar and breast of his coat were embroidered in yellow with the most delicate skill. Between his right arm and his body he carried his cavalry cap, whose long, white, graceful feathers waved with every touch of the breeze or motion of his person. On his left breast shone his Imperial badge, and suspended from it a brilliant diamond cross. It was the very military dress of his grandfather, Alexander, which had gained him the reputation of being the handsomest monarch in Europe, and it now gave to his successor a look of manly majesty, becoming the Emperor of the Russias.

With easy grace and dignity Alexander seated himself on a sofa, and motioned his nephew to take a place by his side.

"I am, indeed, glad to see you at our leisure, and to prove by my own eyes that your long and weary exile is over. I rejoice your search has been successful, and that the beauty and brilliance of your daughter so fully repay your toil and peril."

"Heaven has, indeed, been kind," replied the Prince, tenderly. "The charms and affections of my Marie inspire me with constant gratitude. How happy I am

to see your Majesty almost in the vigor of your youth."

"Truly you have cause for thankfulness," said the Emperor. "I have finished reading your report, and the account of your adventures thrilled me with the keenest interest. Your observations on various countries, and especially the great Republic, are most instructive, and I have ordered them to be made a part of the records of my Empire."

"I am, indeed, gratified, your majesty, that you have been pleased and profited by my narration," answered the Prince, glowing with satisfaction.

"And now," resumed the Emperor, "I will fulfill an intention conceived years since. I appoint you my immediate and confidential Grand Counsellor, and shall admit you to my presence as my most trusted and intimate adviser."

The Prince knelt before his uncle, and kissing his hand, dropped a tear, which was not unfelt, and never forgotten. When he returned to his place, he said :

"May it please your Majesty, I am compelled to speak to you on a subject the most delicate and embarrassing. After the recovery of my Marie, and until the legal proofs of her identity were secured, I left her in America, under the care of an old friend, Mrs. Admiral Stewart, whose grace, beauty and intelligence excited St. Petersburg fifteen years since. She has a son who greatly resembles her, and whose career has been successful and splendid. Without an exchange of words he and Marie contrived an exchange of hearts.

I found that her happiness centered in Mr. Stewart. He is a noble man, and, in comparative youth, has risen to be President of one of the great railways of America. Nothing remained but to persuade him to live in Russia, and I would be pleased if you would offer him a title and position in your empire worthy of my rank, and the charms of my daughter."

"Nothing could afford me more happiness," answered the Czar, warmly. "I am delighted to multiply the ties between the Republic and my Empire. The husband of my little Marie shall be Prince Stewart Gallitzin Orloff, and Superintendent of the Railways of Russia."

"Thank you. Oh, thank your Majesty, and thank Heaven," cried the Prince, who, again kneeling, kissed warmly and often the Imperial hand. "Our happiness is complete. A mountain is lifted from my heart and a midnight from my path. I consecrate, to you and your Empire, myself and my family. Long may you live and reign, and prosperous may be your successors!"

At these words a shadow crossed the face of the Emperor. His appearance changed in an instant. The flush fled from his cheek, the light from his eye and his voice became hollow and hesitating.

"I fear for myself and for Russia," he exclaimed, both sadly and bitterly. "My grandfather died in gloom. After the Crimean disasters, even the iron Nicolas passed under an eclipse. Now the hereditary darkness gathers over me. I see my successor flying from the rage of assassins, defended by soldiers they

suspect, hid in palaces they detest—the Majesty of Russia, which once awed the world, trembling before a few desperate men and frenzied women! It is a fearful vision, and it shakes my soul with dread. Night is over me and my Empire.”

“Oh, say not so!” exclaimed the Prince, in the deepest sorrow. “I beseech your Majesty, say not so! These nihilistic conspiracies cannot succeed. They affront the noblest instincts of our nature. A few wretches should not mar your peace and cloud your hope.”

“They are not a few,” answered the Czar vehemently. They are many. And they grow. Nobles, made bankrupt by the Emancipation, swell their ranks. Princes are among them; yea, the sons and the daughters of Princes. Even Justice seems turned against me, and those she doomed to mines, to prisons, to the gallows, have multiplied and intensified my enemies until they fill my realm and alarm the world.”

“But surely, your Majesty, surely,” responded the Prince, “assassinations so mean, so cowardly, so cruel, so destructive, often of the innocent, must disgust mankind, and perish in the indignation they enkindled!”

“Assuredly,” said the Emperor, with more composure; “but before they cease I will be their victim, and Russia be wrapped in flames and stained with blood. Sovereignty must reside in the one or in the many. It cannot be divided. Either it is in the monarch or it is in the people. The contest is now between the divine right of kings and the divine right of multitudes

When power in either is unquestioned, there is peace; but when in transition only war. This was the strife in England until the Revolution. In France, from the last Louis to the present Republic there has been a century of blood. Germany is now experiencing the throes of my own Empire. No Roman-off will ever part with his sovereignty. We are a family of monarchs. But the people are more powerful than we, and if we cannot bend we must break. Our destiny is recorded. Over myself is the shadow of fate!"

"Oh, your majesty," cried the Prince in agony, "your people can never forget, the world can never forget, Heaven can never forget the Emancipation. You gave liberty to millions. Half of Russia you transferred to the Commune! You granted trial by jury, the local assembly, and other privileges which mark the grandest era in human progress. You must, you will have the thanks of the human race!"

"Thanks!" exclaimed the Emperor, caustically. "Thanks!" he repeated, with curling lip and flashing eye. "Thanks!" he added, with an almost furious anger and indignation. "Yes! thanks in daggers, in pistols, in dynamite—thanks in plots, assassinations, and massacres—thanks in wounds, blood and death—thanks in the attempted destruction of myself, my family, my very name! Such are the rewards of my beneficence!"

"Oh, wait, your Majesty, wait, but wait," said the Prince, touched into tears. "Time will vindicate

you, Russia will bless you, History will immortalize you, Heaven will reward you."

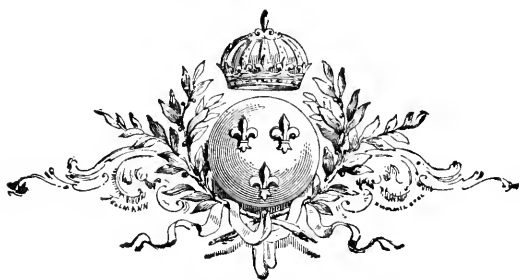
"So once I thought," replied the Emperor, with indescribable sadness. "That dream of my youthful enthusiasm has also perished. I yearned to give my people liberty. What was the result? Nobles and peasants were frenzied with wild dreams, and angry because the gift was not more ample. Crazed with impossible visions, they compelled me to withdraw the privileges I was glad to bestow. Their own mad desires forced me to repression. They made necessary exile, imprisonment and death. They wrested from my hand the gift of love and made it grasp the sword of justice. My very benevolence has clouded me with a darker hate and a more damning opprobrium."

"Hard!" replied the Prince, "hard! too, too hard! I see, as never before, the difficulties of your Imperial position, and the thorns beneath your diadem, and I consecrate anew my life to my noble and generous master."

"I do not doubt you," said the Emperor, embracing him. "But fate is too strong for us. The weapon is ready which is to shatter my life. Across my path is a grave. One monument marks my deliverance, but the next will commemorate my destruction. My father held back the avalanche, knowing it could not be controlled when once loose. I, in my young, vain confidence, gave it an impulse, and it has ruined me, and will overwhelm my empire."

The Prince was deeply moved, and saw that in his

present mood it would be impossible to console the Emperor. He arose to bid him adieu. The gloom in his face mocked his military costume and imperial magnificence.







“The first beams of the sun were burning and dancing around the dome of St. Isaac’s.”
Page 565.

CHAPTER XIX.

A RUSSIAN ARCHBISHOP.



ON the next morning after his interview with the Prince, Alexander, at the same hour, sat in the Library of the Winter Palace. Before him was a table of exquisite and remarkable workmanship, furnished not only for the convenience, but the caprice of the writer. A clock of gold ticked on the side opposite his Majesty, and rang out each quarter in a tone of liquid silver. Paper-knives, and paper weights, pens, inkstands, all the appointments were sufficient to meet the demands of royal taste. Behind the Emperor was an immense sofa which had supported the form of Peter the Great, and a lounge made from his camp-bedstead. Portraits of all the Muscovite monarchs hung round the walls, and grander than even Ivan the Terrible was the imperious Nicholas. Alexander was in a blue satin gown, fringed with ermine and tied about his waist with a purple sash tasselled with gold. The defiant and unhappy expression of the previous day had vanished. A calm had come into his soul and diffused itself over his features.

Nor was the tempest ever again to disturb his breast. He had fought and he had conquered.

His Majesty was expecting the Bishop of Novgorod, who entered at the appointed hour, knelt before his sovereign, kissed his hand and was invited to a seat on the royal sofa.

"I have sent for you, Bishop," began the Czar, graciously, "on a personal matter of infinite and eternal consequence. Your course in America excited my admiration, and your career since your return has gained my confidence. Especially do I approve your conduct toward your brother."

The Bishop started. He was embarrassed. The color rushed to his face. He exclaimed hastily:

"May it please your Majesty, it was precisely that I wish to explain. I thought you might object to my affording Ruric a shelter. But, I met him in the street, blind, helpless, pursued by dogs, and persecuted by idle boys, and I felt that he was yet my *brother*. My arms opened to him, he fell on my breast and I led him home. I must apologize for harboring one who has sought the life of your Majesty, and been the foe of your Empire, and indeed, of humanity itself."

"Your fraternal instinct directed you aright," answered the Emperor, with tenderness and animation. "Our affections are often our best guides. I did not intend his punishment to extend beyond his loss of sight. By giving him an asylum, you have removed him from popular sympathy, and relieved my government of a great embarrassment. To testify my sanc-

tion of your conduct, and to reward you for the service I will soon impose, I promise you, when the vacancy occurs, that you shall be Archbishop of Moscow, and Patriarch of all the Russias."

Nicolai was overwhelmed. Amazement made him speechless. He had never even thought of such a dignity. To have been made an angel would not have caused him more surprise. At last, with a supreme effort, he fell before the Emperor, clasped his knees in a vain effort to express his thanks, and had to be raised to the sofa by the imperial hand.

When he had become sufficiently composed, the Emperor inquired:

"And how is your brother Ruric? I trust his punishment was wise, and will be for his own good and that of the State."

"The Almighty has ordered all," cried the Bishop, in tears. "The eye of the flesh has been sealed that the eye of the spirit might be opened. Light eternal has entered his soul. He is penitent, humble, and has commissioned me to beg your Majesty's pardon. If permitted, he would do it himself in the dust. His whole time is given to prayer and his Bible, and letters sent over the world to persuade his Nihilistic friends that the Divine Law, forbidding murder, is of Supreme obligation. Never was a change more radical and wonderful. The Divine Grace has made Ruric a child. His face breathes peace and love, and he is, indeed, a vessel of light and a monument of mercy."

"I congratulate you," answered his Majesty, with

quivering lip and voice. "This is inexpressibly grateful to me. He is a Prince of the House of Russikoff, which is even older than our own. If you deem me worthy, after what I have to say to you, arrange that we commune together with my nephew Alexis, in a private chapel of St. Isaac's, you yourself administering the sacrament."

"This is," exclaimed the Bishop, "an unexpected honor and pleasure. It will be a memorable hour in the history of the Empire. Oh, that all the Nihilistic enemies of your Majesty might thus kneel before the cross!"

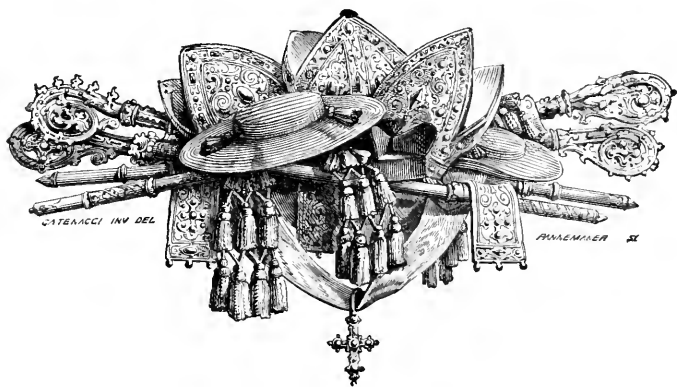
"Amen!" cried the Emperor, with a loud voice, "Amen and amen! May my foes find forgiveness in the Divine Blood. In our Saviour may all strife be hushed and the world find peace."

Alexander then took the Bishop by the hand and led him to the great Imperial chair. When he was seated, the Emperor kneeled before him as the representative of Jesus Christ, the Divine Majesty of the universe. He then began in a low tone:

"I need not recite my plans for freedom, their failure, and my rebellious bitterness, of disappointment when the license of my people drove me to repressive measures. I cursed my subjects as madmen. I cursed myself as a fool. I cursed my destiny. I even cursed Heaven. My enterprise was too great for me and I quailed. It required industry, devotion, courage, faith, self-abnegation, and I wished pleasure and self-indulgence. I should have collected round me wise states-

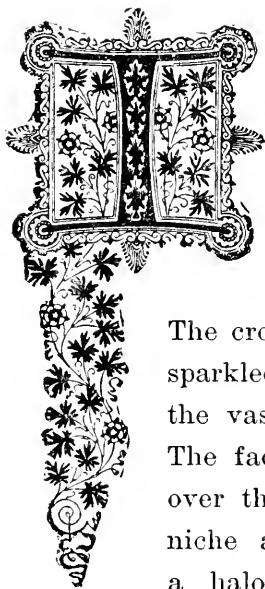
men and pious divines, and sought help in the Almighty. Here was my capital sin. Stung by my conscience, I found criminal relief in effeminate pleasure, and became ensnared and infatuated with the Princess Dolgorouki. This crushed the heart of my loyal, loving wife. I set the law of my will above the law of my God. A royal worm despised the Sovereign of the universe. The death of the Empress tore the veil from my eyes. I see. I confess. I mourn my sin. My purpose is to do justice by marrying the Princess, and legitimatizing my unfortunate children. Whatever penance you prescribe, I will perform. I pray your Absolution and admission to the Holy Communion."

The Bishop stood on the platform of the chair, above the Emperor. He lifted his hands toward heaven, and in a clear, sweet, but authoritative tone, pronounced the Absolution of the Holy Orthodox Church. His Majesty arose, and the men embraced in tears. It is thus in the *cross* that even Earth and Heaven will find eternal liberty, fraternity, equality.



CHAPTER XX.

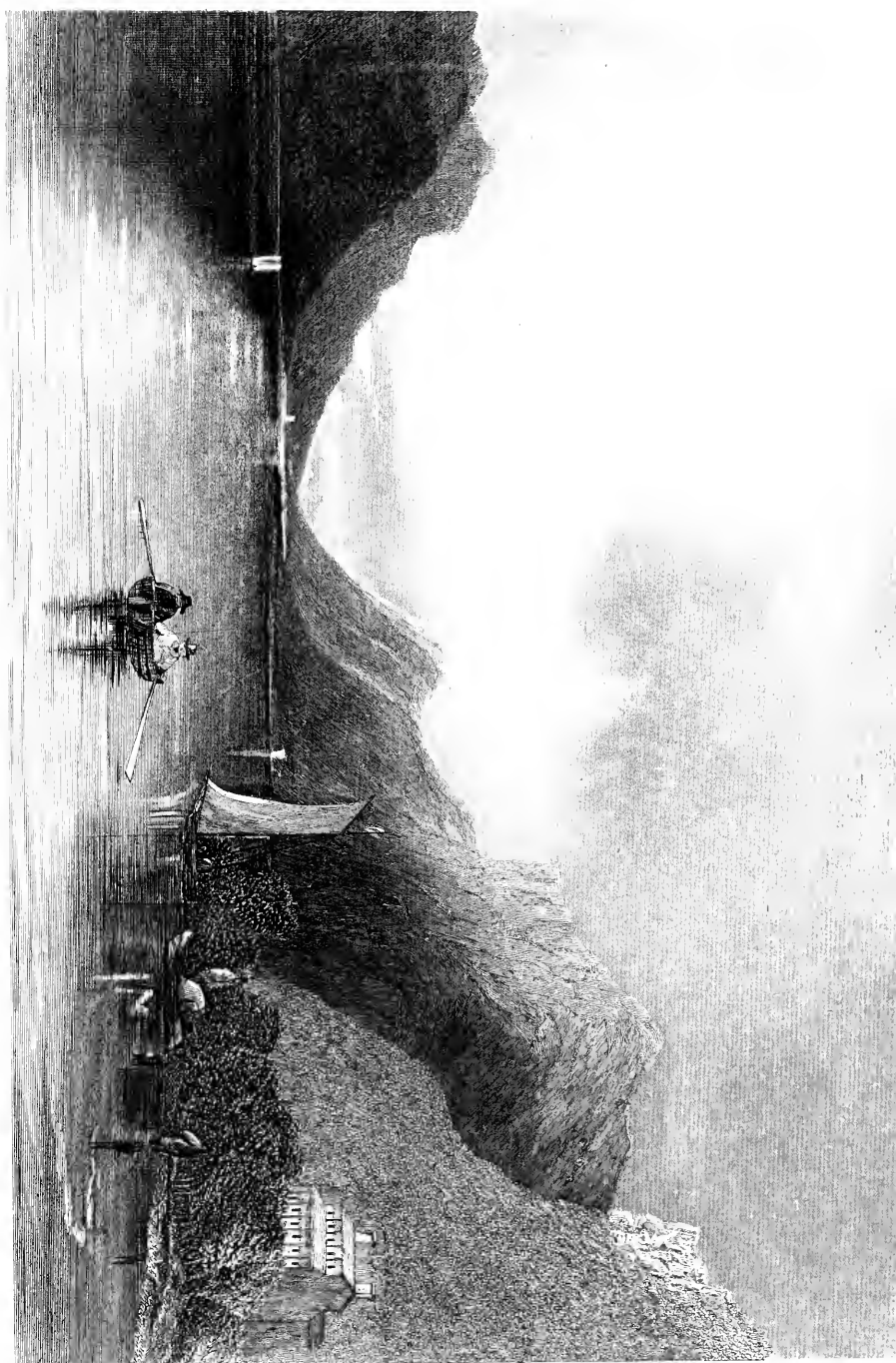
THE RUSSIAN CATHEDRAL.



T was a morning in St. Petersburg, in which the brilliance of summer, and the mellowness of Autumn were commingled. Never had the dome of the great cathedral shone with a more effulgent glory.

The cross above it, standing in the crescent, sparkled with a living light. Within the vast edifice was an atmosphere of joy. The faces of the saints and angels pictured over the altar, or smiling in marble from niche and column, seemed encircled with a halo of celestial peace. Indeed, the whole cathedral breathed some bliss too deep to be voiced in sound. Silent, as the blaze above the altar, was this joy in souls.

The source and center of this divine feeling was a small, private chapel. There the Bishop of Novgorod was in the act of administering the Holy Communion. He had just received, and was now imparting. His gorgeous episcopal robes gave dignity to his office, and before him, between Prince Alexis on his right, and Prince Ruric on his left, kneeled the Majesty of Russia.



SAABATH BAY POINT.

EXPRESSLY FOR KINGS OF CAPITAL AND KNIGHTS OF LABOUR

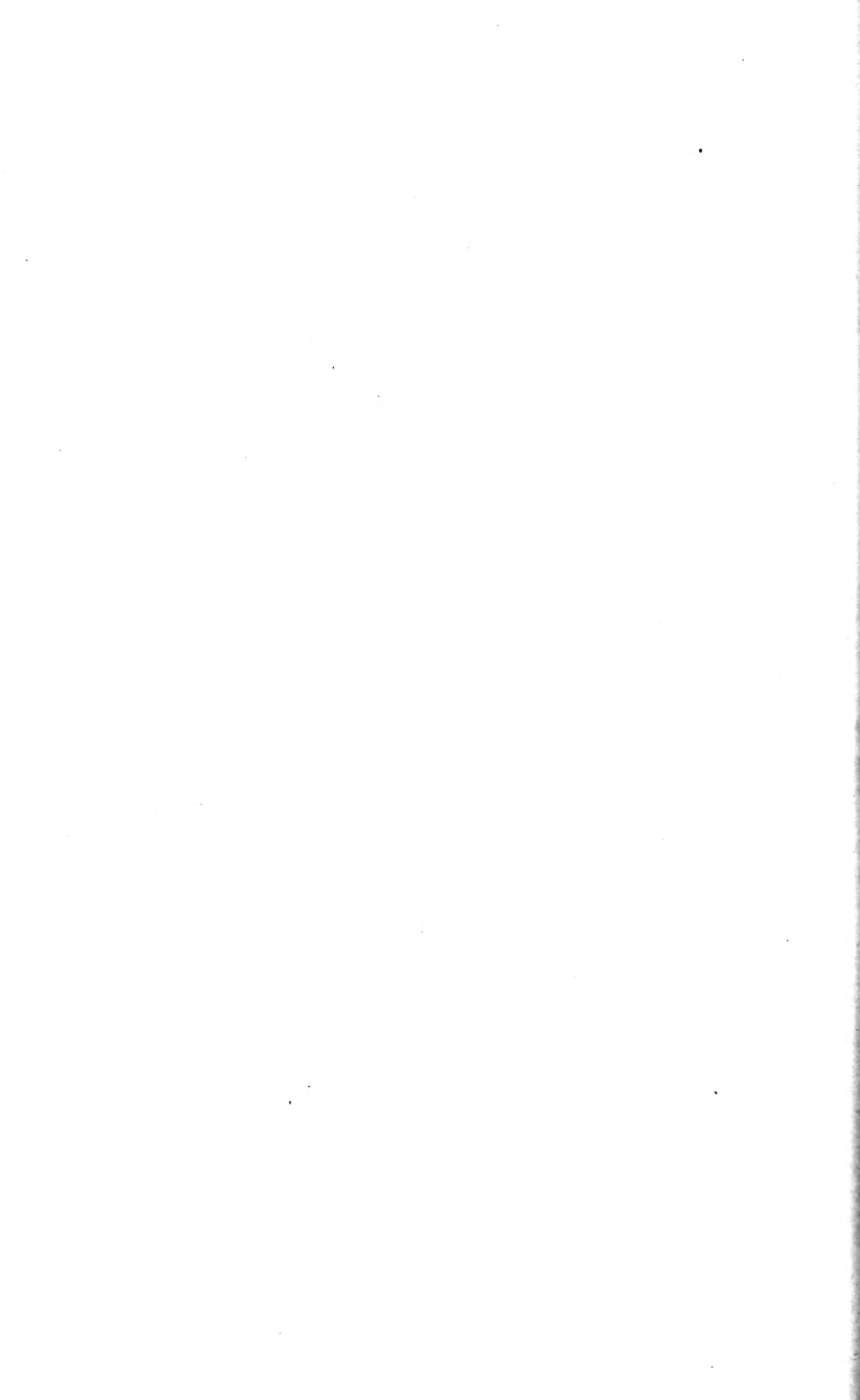


Here, in the Blood of the Cross, were quenched the feuds of ages. Monarch and Nihilist had become one in their Saviour. Hate was turned into love, and Heaven smiled over earth.

When the Communion ended with the Benediction of Peace, the music of the choir and organ burst forth, flooding the edifice with joyful harmonies.

Russia never beheld a more magnificent spectacle. Emperor, Princes, Dukes, Counsellors, Generals, were there in the splendors of rank and office. The beauty and the chivalry of the land were represented, brilliant with all Russia could command. It was one of the grand days of the Empire. In the midst of all, appeared before the Chancel, the Prince Stewart Gallitzin Orloff, and the Princess Marie Alexander Romanoff. Her father gave away the Bride, and the Archbishop Nicolai said the service. In that marriage, the old empire and the young republic were united in a new and lasting bond. Weeping, unobserved, behind a pillar, and happiest of the throng, stood Prince Ruric, once the blind Nihilist, now the illuminated Christian.





CAPITAL AND LABOR.

A WORD WITH KINGS AND KNIGHTS.

THE LABORER IN EUROPE AND AMERICA.



IN every inquiry about his rights and interests, the American workman should consider his situation in contrast with that of his brother in Europe. It is almost impossible to overstate the difference. Politically and socially, between the men of the Old World and the men of the New, our Revolution has placed wider barriers than physically the ocean makes between the continents.

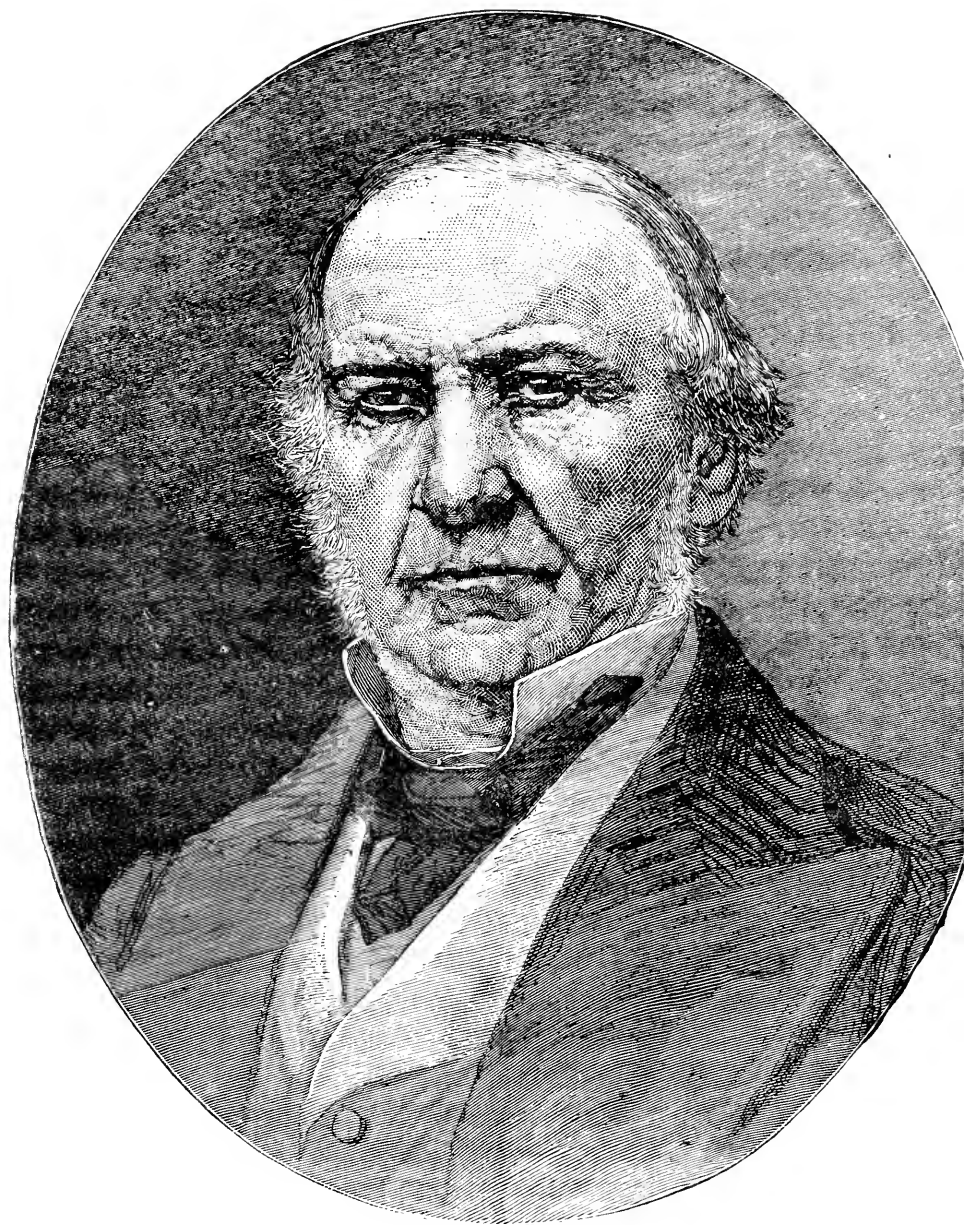
Let me illustrate this! To understand the question, we must go far back in the world's history.

In Assyria, India, and Egypt the laborer was a slave. He virtually belonged to the monarch. He had no rights, no will, no defense. He was used like a chattel for the convenience of his masters. The king could force him into the army, or make him build cities and monuments at the mere royal caprice. There was no appeal and no escape. Egypt's pyramids stood on a hundred thousand lives. On graves Rameses erected his works. All the improvements in the ancient Oriental empires cost this re-

morseless sacrifice of human beings. The laborer was worked to death. Peace was almost as fatal to him as war. And after having been made thus a victim to his tyrant, his flesh was often left to the dog, the hyena, and the vulture. Our Park obelisk, now rising into the free air of America, was in Egypt, during centuries, a witness to this slaughter of men. Nor was the condition much improved in republican Greece and Rome. In those classic countries labor was performed almost wholly by slaves, whose time, gifts, property, and lives were at the merey of their owners. Especially in Rome the master was an irresponsible tyrant. In case of insurrection he could put to death every slave in his possession, the innocent with the guilty; and he often exercised his right in blood. The Roman home was thus a scene of cruelty corresponding to the Colosseum, where men killed wild beasts and each other for the amusement of the populace. No words can depict the agony of the laboring classes in those ancient countries, where escape from oppression seemed impossible.

During the Middle Ages there was an improvement. Dark as were the times, there came some help to the working classes. The feudal system did much to elevate their condition. Serfdom existed, but was softened by the interest the lord had in his dependent. Still, a rich noble or a powerful king was a virtual despot; every advantage was on his side; and this condition continued in many European countries down to recent times. Never was a peasantry more exhausted by taxation, wasted by war, made desperate by poverty, and oppressed by every species of tyranny, than the laborers of France during the reign of Louis the Great. Nor did the Revolution and Napoleon decrease their miseries.

In England the lot of the laborer was more tolerable. The British spirit was less willing to submit to wrong. Yet, as we shall see hereafter, there is a wide difference now between the land of our forefathers and our own Republic.



WILLIAM E. GLADSTONE,

Prime Minister of England, by whose efforts the franchise has recently been extended to over two millions of people.

Nor must we suppose there were no instances of resistance among slaves and peasants to the tyrannies of their rulers. The abused donkey at last rebels: his rage may be dangerous. When human endurance ceases, the coward becomes a hero. Despair is always formidable. An insurrection of gladiators under Spartacus shook Rome with fear, and was suppressed only after terrific battles, conducted with the greatest skill and energy by the conquering empire. Wat Tyler's rebellion in England alarmed the nobles, and for its little hour disturbed the throne. In the time of Luther infuriated peasants filled Germany with dread and horror; and the French Revolution, with its ghastly slaughters, was but a volcanic explosion produced by the wrongs of centuries.

Now in this country the great political evils of humanity have been relieved. We are reaping the harvests of ages, sowed in blood and tears. Our free Constitution gives a clear field to labor and capital. They can settle their struggles without a political hinderance.

I can best show this by a few examples.

In Great Britain the franchise has just been extended to two millions more of citizens. Before this month closes many laborers, who never before enjoyed the privileges of freemen, will have deposited their votes for members of Parliament. See what questions meet them having no connection with their relations to capital! They have at once to consider the disestablishment of the Church, the abolition of the law of primogeniture and other restrictions on the transfer of lands, and, indeed, the overthrow of a titled aristocracy and an hereditary House of Lords. Add to these the Irish problem! More than this. A large, influential, and growing party is now advocating a republic! The people ask why *talents* rather than *birth* should not give title to a seat in the upper house of Parliament. Nor do they stop even here.

They see how useless a factor the monarch has become in the government, and naturally inquire, also, why such vast sums of the people should be spent annually in the support of royal indolence, luxury, and magnificence.

Thus the English voting laborer has his attention taken from his own interests as related to his employer and fixed on monstrous evils which have descended from all the past ages of the world, and which will require many future ages to cure.

Even in republican France questions of Church are embarrassing, and enter into all the calculations of party politics. The social relations and hereditary aspirations of the royal and imperial families frequently excite the people and affect the elections. A thousand questions, only to be understood on the soil, have come down from the former times of France to create difficulties of which in this country we have slight conception. It is hard to uproot the intertangling growths of an old forest.

The whole battle of political independence is yet to be fought in Germany. She is two hundred years behind England. Bismarck is just now confronting in the imperial legislature the very questions for which Hampden and Milton gave battle in the days of the tyrannic Stuarts.

And what shall we say of Russia? No more infamous tyranny ever existed. Serfdom has indeed been abolished. The peasant communes own one-half of the lands, which before the emancipation, belonged to the nobles. A great advance was made by the grand act of Alexander. Yet such is the ignorance of the Russian peasant that, while technically free, he is politically a slave. The brave spirits in the cities are always thwarted and defeated by the stolid stupidity of the farm laborers, who cannot be made to understand their political rights as freemen. Hence Russia is still ruled by tyrants. The Czar is absolute; he governs by spy and soldier. Citizens are seized at night, and without trial dragged

to the prisons of St. Petersburg and the mines of Siberia, where tortures are endured which have never been exceeded under the sway of the ancient Oriental despots of Assyria and Egypt. That such a tyranny as that of Russia should be endured for a moment is a blot on our nineteenth century.

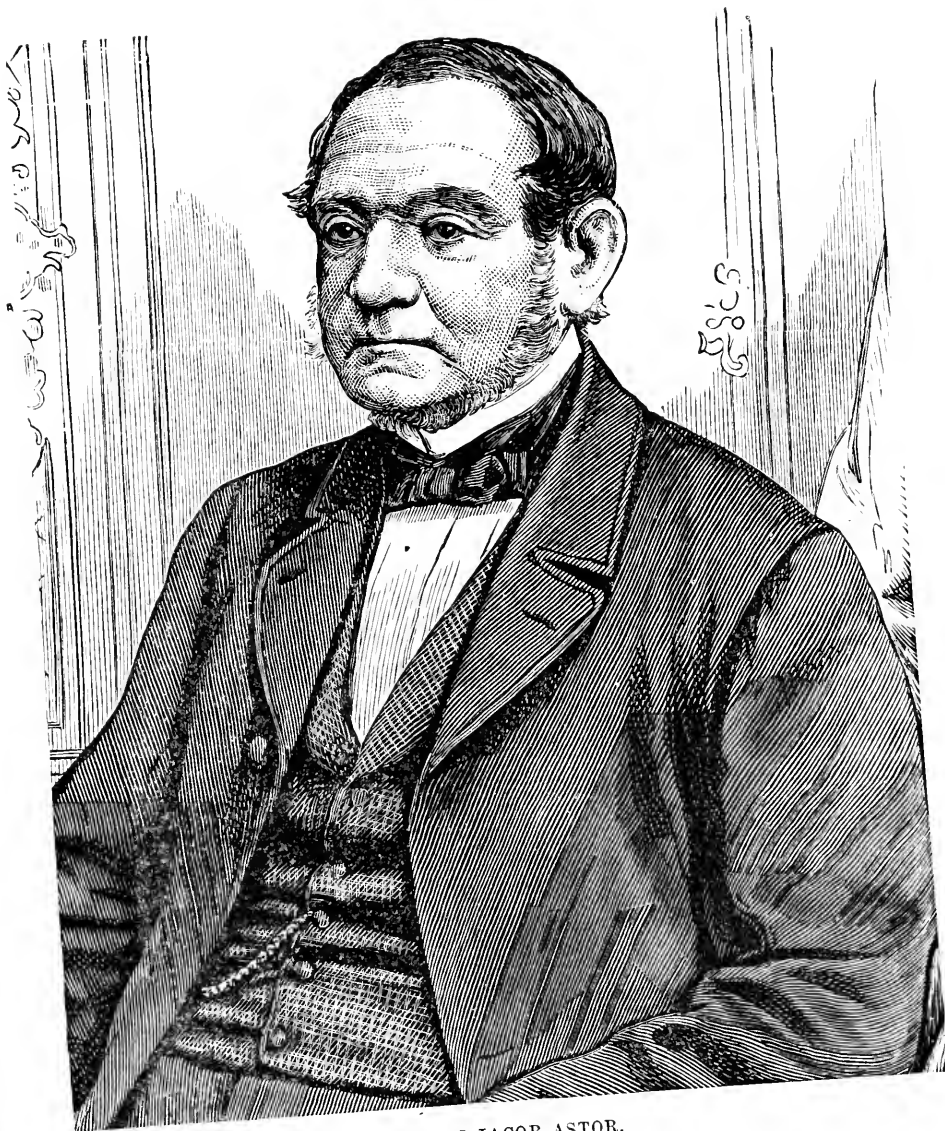
But from all these vexing and often cruel oppressions and entanglements which now impede and disturb Europe, our Republic has been freed by the Revolution. Our fathers solved the great political problems of humanity. American workmen have an inheritance bought by blood and rich with all the past experience and wisdom of the world. Every political right is secured to them. Rich and poor are the same before the law. In our courts of justice, capital and labor meet on an equal level. Rather, juries sympathize with labor against capital. When he sues a corporation or a monopolist, the workman has the better chance of the verdict. And in the pursuit for office, the son of a farmer, carpenter, or blacksmith more readily commands support than the son of an Astor, a Gould, or a Vanderbilt. Especially has our own age departed from the more aristocratic traditions and customs of our fathers. Washington and Hamilton were far less democratic than Grant and Lincoln.

The ballot in this country is in the hands of every man. Office, too, is open to all. Not a workman whose son may not be the President of the United States, and welcome his humble father and mother to the White House. Under our Constitution, *politically*, everything possible has been done to secure man's inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We are embarrassed by none of those radical and revolutionary questions which drive men in despair to torch, dagger, and dynamite. Nor can American workmen estimate too highly the advantage. Yet with our *political* rights made sure we are still agitated by *social* and *commercial* questions. Capital and labor are often in fierce battle over the country.

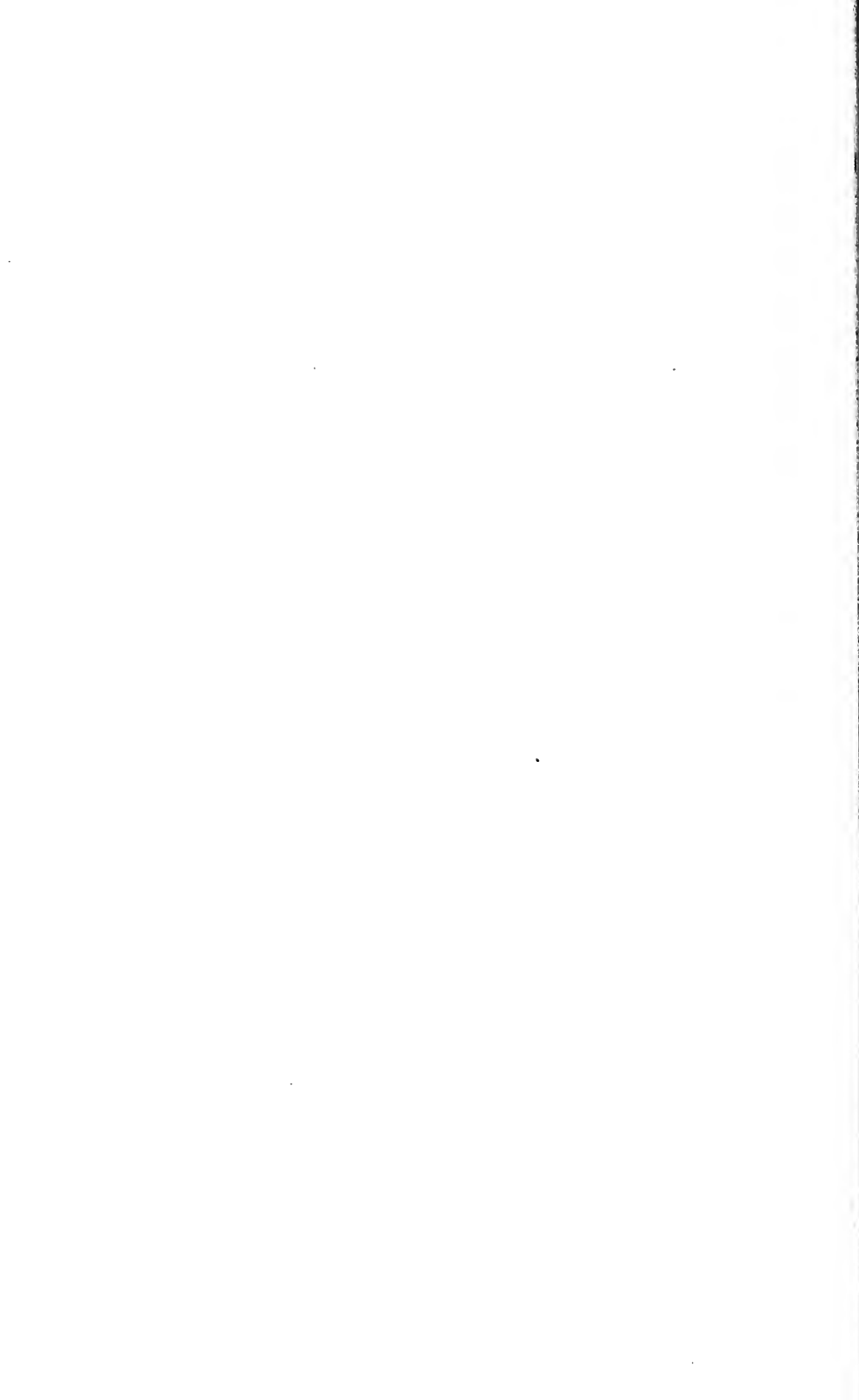
Strikes sometimes convulse the land. Manufactories are closed, operatives are idle, mobs are violent, trade is injured, wounds are given, blood is shed, death is not infrequent, and alarm spreads through all classes of society.

It is true we have one eminent advantage—capital and labor can settle their strifes without political side-issues. They are face to face in open field. Nothing interposes to hinder battle. Here the questions between them, if anywhere, are to be decided *rightly* and *forever*. This increases the responsibility of American workmen. They are fighting in the cause of their brotherhood throughout the world. But how does it happen that in a country so free and so fertile, and under laws so wise and beneficent, there can arise any contest between labor and capital? There must be some deep reason for its existence.

The *true* interests of neither party, properly understood, demand struggle. In society and in government what is for the good of all is for the good of each, and what is for the good of each is for the good of all. If men always knew what was best for themselves there would be no strifes. They are misled by greed, selfishness, and passion. Still, as these lower elements exist in our human nature, we cannot leave them out of our calculations. We must consider man as he is. Our plans must not be for ideal conditions. As we see them around us and in history, mortals are always opposing each other; class fights class, and interest fights interest. Hence we must have our schemes of improvement on these plain facts in human nature. We plan for the earth and not for the clouds.



JOHN JACOB ASTOR,
Former New York merchant king, whose fortune at the time of his death was estimated at over \$20,000,000.



SOURCES OF DISPUTE BETWEEN CAPITAL AND LABOR.

The question returns to us: What is the source of this perpetual war between capital and labor in a country politically free, socially happy, and commercially prosperous? I think I can illustrate this part of my subject best by a particular example. I will select a typical man of the country and the times, whom I personally knew, and with whom I was during years intimately and officially associated.

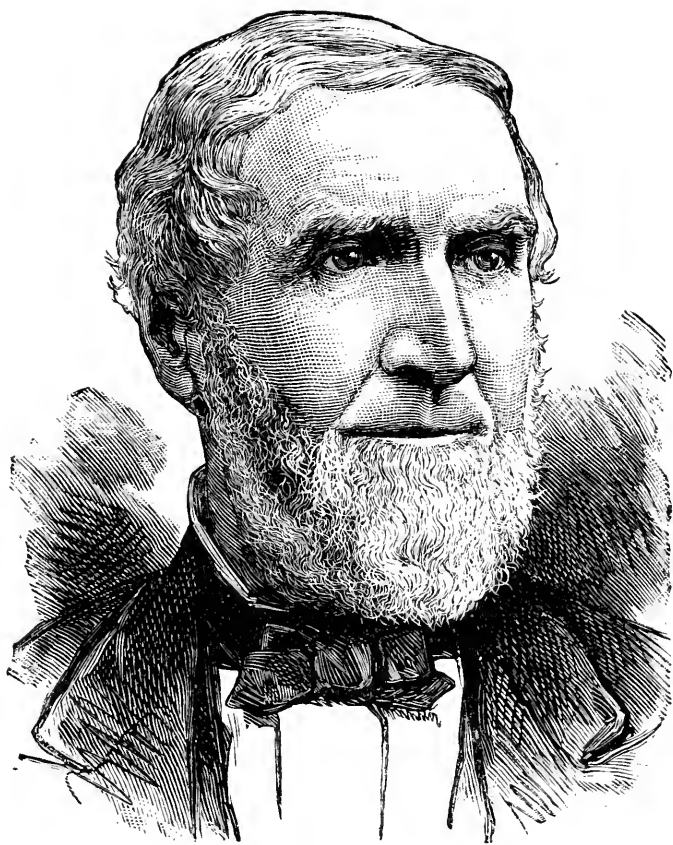
ASA PACKER was born in Connecticut in the early part of this century. He had small opportunities of education. When young he was apprenticed to a carpenter. At the age of nineteen he migrated to Pennsylvania to pursue his trade. Here he improved his mind by attending a night-school. Before he was twenty-one he married an innkeeper's daughter. A newspaper advertisement attracted him to Mauch Chunk, where he obtained work in building canal-boats. He and his fellow carpenters were to have an interest in these boats, and were paid partly for their labor in a species of stock-certificates. The companions of Asa Packer became tired of the arrangement, sold him their rights, and left the business. He alone had the foresight and perseverance to remain. As a reward of his toil and skill he became owner of a canal-boat, which he commanded, while his wife assisted in the kitchen and cabin. Now wealth increased. Asa Packer

soon owned a store. He became worth a hundred thousand dollars. A charter had been obtained for the Lehigh Valley Railroad from Easton to the coal regions about Mauch Chunk, thus connecting them with the markets of New York and Philadelphia. But the enterprise was abandoned. Asa Packer, however, saw it could succeed, and in it invested his whole capital. For years he struggled with enormous difficulties. As late as 1857 he was a bankrupt. After that date the stock of the Lehigh Valley Road rose in the market. Asa Packer became rich. He gave four million dollars to a college and nearly half as much to a hospital. His other charities were large, numerous, and liberal. Ten millions more of his estate will yet probably go to the University he founded, and be expended in giving free education to the children of the people. He made many of his friends wealthy, and brought employment and competence to thousands of workmen. Such a success all believe to be deserved, and such an example all wish to be followed. No man envies Asa Packer; no man who would not desire such a career; no man who would not wish it for his children. Before such a success class distinctions vanish.

We will now see what was essential to his advancement.

Had not Asa Packer trained himself in the night-school his career would have been different. Here we perceive his superior energy and application. Suppose he had not remained in Mauch Chunk when his brother carpenters left their work and sold him their certificates. He would have missed his opportunity! Again we remark his greater sagacity and perseverance. And he alone saw success in the Lehigh Valley Railroad; he alone risked his all in the abandoned enterprise; he alone deserved, therefore, the reward of his final success. No American workman doubts his claim or disputes his title.

But see what money was needed by Asa Packer to undertake



ASA PACKER,

▲ Laborer who became a Capitalist. Former President Lehigh Valley Railroad.

the railroad. He had made one hundred thousand dollars before his career in this began. It was the result of his skill, courage, and economy. No man but he had a right to dispose of the fruit of these gifts. All he had was invested in the railroad on his own judgment and at his own risk.

What was money wanted for? The old stock had to be bought; the labor of workmen had to be bought; land for shops and tracks had to be bought; cross-ties had to be bought; rails had to be bought; locomotives had to be bought; machinery for manufacture had to be bought; all necessary things for a large railroad enterprise had to be bought. This required CAPITAL. And there must be a head to so great a work. Vast power must be in one man. This our American workmen ought to understand. Let me expand the thought!

If three men only embark in a business, one of their number will take the lead. His physical and mental powers give him precedence, and the other two submit. Without such *headship* business is impracticable. Democratic ants have their president and monarchic bees their queen. On the pond even the ducks follow their leader. In the sky the silly wild geese have yet the wisdom to place one of their number at the apex of their triangular squadron, which thus, like a living wedge, can better pierce the blue of heaven. Horse, dog, beaver, buffalo, and all social animals exhibit the same tendency. Among men are required higher qualities. Swiftmess, secrecy, and unity are often necessary to success. This means *leadership*, which is alike essential to the family, to business, and to government by a universal and inevitable law.

Having been the head of a college for many years, I absolutely know that great power in the president is necessary to his success. Nor can you anywhere in society escape a condition in the very constitution of human nature.

Take our own Republic! The President of the United States has a larger prerogative than the Queen of Great Britain. With all her claim to majesty, she is a mere figure-head in the government. She dare not nullify an Act of Parliament. Before the House of Commons she is feeble as a babe. However she may prefer a cabinet, a majority of one in the popular body hurls her ministers from office. Should she dare to exercise her admitted prerogative, a political tempest would sweep away her throne.

On the contrary, how vast both the theoretical and the practical power of the President! He is commander-in-chief of the army and navy. He appoints the judges of the Supreme Court, whose decisions are beyond appeal in all national legal questions. By his veto he can set aside an Act of Congress passed by a majority of the House and in the Senate. His official patronage is scarcely exceeded by the most autocratic government. Such are the powers conferred on our chief magistrate by the Fathers of the Revolution! Without such a prerogative, Mr. Lincoln could never have guided our country through the wild perils of the Civil War. All experience attests the wisdom of our ancestors.

In the case of an Asa Paeker there is no disposition to withhold power. He used his position justly, wisely, beneficently. About his shops and foundries were thousands of happy workmen who owned their homes, educated their children, made themselves respected as citizens, and had the advantages of the hospital and university, and who would have died in the defense of a man they loved to honor. During the great railroad strike, when others fortified their houses and were ready to shoot down the mob, the workmen at the Bethlehem Steel Works sent a delegation from their own ranks to patrol our University grounds and protect our property. What a tribute to their benefactor! And as the body of the noble old man passed along his railroad

to the grave, at the toll of the University bell every Irish laborer on the lawn threw down his shovel and mattock, and fell on his knees to testify his affection and veneration for a departed friend.

The people spontaneously concede great powers for business to an Asa Packer. It is given without grudge or stint. Had kings and capitalists in the history of our world all resembled our Mauch Chunk millionaire, there had never been on earth a strike or a rebellion. Nor do workmen envy such a person his mansion, his carriage, his servants, and all the outward and visible signs of his success. Rather the laborer, with pride and hope, points his children to such tokens of prosperity as proofs that each one of them may become an Asa Packer. Under such just, kind, and wise administration, Nihilism, Socialism, and Communism would be scorned by the people as absurdities.

American Labor then admits that, in order to success, great power must belong to Capital.

So far we have considered the case where money and authority have been kindly and wisely employed.

Now suppose the opposite !

Let us conceive that a bad president succeeds Asa Packer. All is changed. The workman is oppressed. His wages are reduced. He is degraded and infuriated by the arrogance of his employer. He can no longer educate his children or keep his family in comfort. A cloud comes over his life. Instead of being cheerfully contented, he becomes rebellious and resentful under a sense of injury. The power in the president of the railroad has been abused. Must the American workman submit? Should he succumb to injustice and, while his family sinks and suffers, see the capitalist, at his expense, rising into affluence and luxury? Is this the teaching of common sense and common justice?

In answering these questions we will look again to government.

Our English and American ancestry met a similar difficulty under a political aspect.

The Saxon sense and independence in our mother country confronted tyranny in a practical way, differing from that of all the other European kingdoms. It was soon seen that without money the tyrant could neither make war nor multiply luxuries. Take from him his pecuniary supplies and you reduce him to the condition of his fellow mortals. The purse rules the sword, and not the sword the purse. Here rose the struggle between the Stuarts and the people. These Kings wished to impose their own taxes and equip their own troops by money forced from their subjects. Men appeared who dared the dungeon and the stake rather than yield this claim to despots. Hampden left his mansion for a jail, resolved not a penny should be wrung from him by tyranny to oppress the people. This contest deluged England with blood, and brought the first Charles to the block, and hurled the second James from his throne, and drove the Stuarts to the Continent, and brought over William and Mary from Holland, and made the British crown forever depend on a British Parliament as representatives of the British people, and created for liberty in every part of the world a new era based on common sense and common justice.

And our fathers taught King George the same lesson. Rather than pay a cent of tax not imposed by themselves, they fought out our independence through the long years of the Revolution. It was a renewal of the old issue between monarch and people in England. We brought the tyrant to terms, and made it a part of our Constitution forever that all bills for revenue must originate in the house of Congress composed of Representatives elected immediately by the people.

We control, then, the prerogative of the President without difficulty. Our wise fathers provided the means. Should he seek to

entangle us in an unjust war or an impolitic alliance, Congress refuses him money. If he violates the Constitution, we impeach him and turn him out of office. Or if he does not please us by his administration we refuse to elect him again to the chief magistracy of the nation. The powers the people grant the people control, and this makes the people satisfied. They know that they themselves create the President. What they choose to make they can choose to unmake.

And in case all constitutional remedies fail, in case a bad man by vile means should pervert the high office, and seek to perpetuate his usurpation, in case no other possible course is left to them, then the people reserve to themselves one last, formidable, fearful cure for these political ills. They have the right of REVOLUTION.

Now I claim this very wisdom taught by our American fathers is also a guide to us American sons in all conflicts between Labor and Capital. We have before us the most admirable examples. A plain path is ours. No man need stumble in the light which floods our land. If we walk in the darkness it is because we make our own night.

We must remember first that the present strife between Capital and Labor has been caused by the increased intelligence of the workingmen.

The Oriental subject made no resistance. The Roman slave had not sufficient energy to assert his rights. The mediæval serf sought redress only by wild, violent, spasmodic, and unsuccessful efforts. Our world was not ready for the present struggles. In no previous age were they possible. They are proofs of what the public schools have accomplished among the masses. *It is educated mind that is now battling oppressive monopoly.*

ORGANIZED LABOR.

Alone the workman is a cipher. Let the best paid hand in a manufactory try by himself to rectify some admitted wrong! He can do nothing. A wave of the hand, a curl of the lip, a shake of the head, any sign of his employer's contempt may suppress him in an instant. To the first add a second man, then a third, a fourth, a fifth! Let ten unite, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, a hundred, a thousand! You have now a force that inspires fear and commands respect. Our workingmen have been taught to combine in creating such a power. Education has enabled them to compact it by intelligence and to direct it by wisdom. Manufactory joins manufactory, district acts with district, and country assists country. Thus over continents is created a gigantic force. The Kings of Capital can now no longer despise the Knights of Labor.

But if labor organizes, capital will, in defense, follow the example. What the kings want in numbers they expect to supply by superior wealth and intelligence. Their very fewness gives them an advantage, since their plans are consequently more compact and manageable.

We will now suppose that all over our Republic organized capital is confronting organized labor.

For such a condition what is the remedy?

Strikes! is the answer. Unquestionable in extreme cases.

STRIKES are in manufactories what REVOLUTIONS are in governments.

What is the effect of this last political remedy? We saw this in our Civil War. Brother fought brother; agriculture interrupted; commerce deranged; manufactures paralyzed; wounds and blood and death; homes devastated; cities burned; whole regions blighted for generations; a million of graves; billions of debt! If it can be avoided no man will resort to a remedy so terrific.

And just so with strikes. They are the extreme remedy of the workingman, and his natural, undeniable right. If he choose to omit labor, who shall compel him? What is the right of one is the right of a thousand. Yes! The American workingman has the same right to a STRIKE the American patriot had to a REVOLUTION.

But at the wrong time and in the wrong place the remedy is worse than the evil. To act successfully the wisdom must equal the responsibility.

Let us look at the facts! Who usually first proposes the strike? See that steady fellow at the drill, the pattern, or the anvil! He is always in his place. He knows his business. His skill is the result of years of practice, and his labor has had its reward. He owns his house, and has the proud pleasure of feeling that the title is in his own name, and made secure by his industry, experience, and economy. Yes! that strong arm and shrewd brain have given his wife and children a home. This noble fellow has a bank account, and is universally respected for his skill and success. Does such a man want to *strike*? He can have no motive for such a measure except where extreme injustice leaves no other remedy attainable.

It is the idle workmen, the dissolute and dishonest workmen, the reckless spendthrift workmen, having nothing to lose, who are therefore eager for the excitement of a strike, agreeable to

them because there is no work, abundance of fun, and plenty to drink. They have their frolic at the expense of others. Silly boys and lazy men furnish oftenest the materials for strikers, as they do for revolutions. But wise and successful workingmen, who own property and support families, will never risk in strikes the happiness of their wives and their children if their rights can be secured by less violent, dangerous, and expensive methods.

See that prosperous village! Its great manufactory crowning the hill is filled with busy operatives. Day and night is heard the roar of machinery. That tall stack is always pouring forth to heaven its smoke as the sure sign of the busy industry that brings comfort. All the region round finds a market for its supplies, so that a whole district is profited by a single factory. Rows of dwellings owned by workingmen smile before trim gardens, and are the plain tokens of prosperity. Nowhere in the world is there more cheering evidence of a hard-earned, well-deserved, and rational mortal happiness.

Reverse the picture! A strike has occurred. We will suppose it for a just and defensible cause. The result is the same. That lofty chimney, long unused, is a silent monument of stagnation and suffering. No clatter of machinery animates the village. Idlers stand at the street corners and carouse in the saloons. Industrious and excellent men are discouraged from want of employment, and their wives and children are in gloom and perhaps starvation. Everything droops throughout the whole region. Cloud has succeeded sunshine, and the storm has spread devastation.

Nor is this the whole. Sending to a distance, capital employs other labor. How hard for the old workmen to see the new in their places! Strangers are receiving the wages *they* once earned, are in the houses *they* once occupied, are enjoying all the advan-



T. V. POWDERLY,
General Master Workman, the head of the KNIGHTS OF LABOR.



tages *they* once possessed! The temptation is too strong for human nature. Violence is inevitable. What can be sadder? Sometimes torch, musket, and dynamite are used for revenge. Blood has been shed. Graves have been filled with mangled, ghastly corpses. That scene of prosperity is a smoking, smouldering, irreparable ruin.

Strange spectacle! Workingmen assaulting each other! The advocates of liberty themselves turning tyrants, and making their own brothers victims of a lawless violence! No longer one class against another! Not operative against monopolist! No! Labor fights labor! Mechanic strikes mechanic! Brother kills brother! And this by the apostles of freedom! On the earth nothing can be more painful and humiliating. Nothing that so surely drives the friends of labor to despair.

Suppose the conflict ended! Capital and Labor are reconciled! The fire is lighted under the boiler; the stack again smokes; the engine moves; the machinery clatters; and production is once more busy. But the market is gone! During the fatal conflict rivals have taken advantage of the feud, and supplanted that doomed and ruined manufactory. It is dead. Labor has destroyed both Capital and itself!

The strike is indeed a formidable power. But it may be for evil as well as for good. It may ruin trade in a village, a city, a district, a country. The sharp sword may kill owner as well as enemy.

Of course, the workman has the employer at his mercy. If he keeps from his post, he stops all the industries in the world. He can close the manufactory, arrest the railway, and make still the wheels of all enterprise.

But he causes the paralysis of death and digs his own grave. In killing capital, labor is itself a suicide. If in mid-ocean the fireman refuses to throw fuel into the furnace, and the sailor to

climb the mast, when the vessel sinks in the tempest all hands perish together in the abyss of waters. So intimately has the Almighty bound us all together for life and for death !

Yet the STRIKE is the workingman's right. You cannot deny such a right. It is like the right of revolution in the citizen. But the American workingman is too shrewd to employ a remedy worse than the disease. He would not endure the pain of a surgeon's knife which leaves cancer-roots, to send the patient, after all his agony, to the grave.

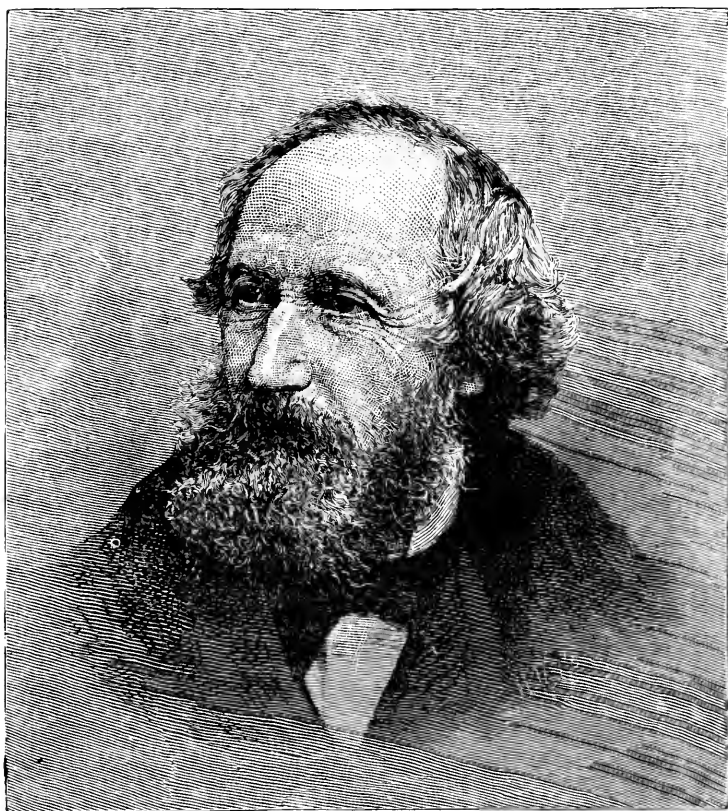
We will then repeat our axiom ! STRIKES, LIKE REVOLUTIONS, ARE JUSTIFIABLE ONLY WHERE ALL ELSE FAILS.

Is there any practical and peaceable solution of the questions between Capital and Labor ?

With all our political rights secure, with a matchless Constitution, with a successful government, with a prosperous people, with advanced intelligence, and universal education at the close of our nineteenth century, we see renewed the old struggle between Roman patrician and plebeian, and afterward between mediæval lord and peasant, and which now in every civilized nation is shaking the foundations of every social structure.

Is there no end of the strife ? Is it in the nature of things ? Is man so formed that the war between Capital and Labor must be perpetual ? We propose to suggest a remedy which seems the best possible under the present conditions of our imperfect human nature.

Two private persons differ in regard to some legal right. A farmer believes his neighbor has appropriated a portion of his land. He may drive away the offender by musket and revolver ; he may kill his enemy ; he may extirpate his family. *But violence begets violence, and justice is never promoted by crime.* Or our farmer may resort to the courts. Here, however, he is confronted with the law's delay, uncertainty, and expense. Lawyers must



CYRUS W. FIELD.

The two great enterprises with which Mr. Field has been most prominently connected are the Atlantic Cable and the New York Elevated Railroads.

be paid; clerks must be paid; constables must be paid; sheriff's must be paid. A bill of costs may well startle a deeply injured man. Besides, with justice on his side, after years of waiting, judge and jury may prove adverse. Hence the court is avoided.

But the difficulty remains. Our farmer cannot see another man trespass on his rights and seize his land. Why not refer the case to his neighbors? Let each party select a judge, and these two a third. Here is an inexpensive tribunal; it is wisely constituted; there need be no delay. The two contestants bind themselves to abide the decision of their self-constituted court. No way can be conceived which can so well adjust a thousand differences among men and preserve the peace of neighborhoods.

Nor does a different principle apply to nations. Russia has, perhaps, an army of two millions; Austria, of a million; Italy, of six hundred thousand; Germany, many more. France aims to have two millions of her citizens at her call for military purposes.

How enormous the expense! Multitudes drawn away from legitimate industries! Oppressive taxes! Youth forced from home by conscriptions, demoralized in the army, and unfitted for civil life! And the misery to parents, the desolation in homes! This even in peace. Let war come! States, kingdoms, empires wasted! Scenes of blood, death, and horror beyond words to paint

ARBITRATION.

To avoid such stupendous calamities it is not strange that wise and good men have suggested a Board of International Arbitration for the world.

Let all disputes between governments be referred to such a tribunal, and let all see that each submits to its decisions. The greatest statesmen can find no better remedy for the devastations of war which curse our earth.

American workingmen need not aspire to be wiser than the most profound jurists and legislators who adorn our age. They may wander in the darkness a thousand years, and will yet be compelled to this result.

Let not Labor be misled by mere pretense. It is a shallow philosophy which sneers at common sense. The truest remedies are the simplest. Nature scatters them round us in familiar substances. The root in our gardens, the mineral beneath our feet, the leaf we pluck on the hillside, often contains the medicine which saves from death.

But in the adjustments between Labor and Capital, how shall this Board of Arbitration be constituted?

This is the real question.

Shall we turn to the government for relief? By such a procedure we only add another court to the numerous and formidable

list for which the citizen is taxed. More clerks, more lawyers, more judges! Capital and Labor would each have counsel to present their respective arguments, and the decision might be postponed until the manufactory perished in the delay. Then there is the danger of corruption. Nor would either party be satisfied with a tribunal not proceeding from themselves. Officials could not always understand their case. A thousand minute questions arise intelligible only to men engaged in daily business. You cannot explain them to an ordinary judge and jury. None can comprehend them but those from youth familiar with the industry. A tribunal constituted by the State would be too distant, too costly, too slow, and too technical for those disagreements between capital and labor which demand an immediate, practical, and inexpensive settlement.

Besides, it would be impossible to enforce the decisions of such a court. There may be in the manufactory a thousand operatives. How can you reach them by a legal process? A government tribunal would be helpless to make effectual its own judgments.

Whatever then is accomplished in reconciling capital and labor must be voluntary. No external power can compel agreement. Indeed, a State court would be a mockery. Remedy must spring from within. Forced from without, it would be resented and make each rupture wider and more disastrous.

Let us place before ourselves a manufactory employing two thousand operatives! I will instance the Bethlehem Steel Works, the thunder of whose hammers was in my ears day and night for years. Conceive this immense establishment in the full tide of prosperity. The furnaces glow, the forges resound, and its rails are sent over the country to meet the demands of numerous railroads. Workmen have high wages and all is content. Under such circumstances how often have I seen the sturdy fellows in my walks on the mountains, with their hands and faces black as

coal, toiling up the steep with empty lunch-buckets, going to their homes amid the rocks, where they were happy with their wives and children, far away from the noise and smoke and peril of forge and furnace!

A difficulty arises in the Bethlehem Steel Works. Capital and Labor disagree. All methods of reconciliation have been tried and so far found vain. A strike is imminent. The whole community is in suspense, agitation, and dread. These two thousand laborers have organized. They meet in council. They discuss the situation. They unite in a proposition. It is decided that they will offer a submission of their case to a board of arbitration. One man shall be chosen from the ranks of Labor, and a second from the ranks of Capital, and these two shall select a third, and the three together shall decide the questions between labor and capital.

The president of the meeting of the workingmen carries the proposition to the president of the corporation. No procedure can be more wise, dignified, or manly. The parties respect each other. Capital considers the terms sent by Labor. Modifications are suggested. The operatives discuss these changes in their hall, and the employers consult in their office. Interview succeeds interview. Many things have to be arranged. The suspense is long. Adjustment appears impossible. At last, however, the parties draw near to each other. In all such cases, where men are sincere, they find a way out of their difficulties. It is often the most unexpected and yet the most simple. After much delay a result is reached. A meeting of the operatives is called to ratify the procedure. Discussions ensue. The measure finally is approved. The president who represents Labor meets the president who represents Capital. Each is authorized to give his signature. Each obeys the delegating authority. Each subscribes his name. The covenant between the parties has now a

binding force. Work is resumed. Profit begins again. Capital and Labor are satisfied. A community is filled with content and joy. Prosperity smiles where ruin was gathering in dark clouds, and preparing to discharge her bolt and hurl round her curse and blight.

This is no ideal picture. Such a result has been more than once achieved. Labor in two instances went far beyond our supposition. To relieve their embarrassed employers the workmen in an English manufactory, during a certain time, volunteered to toil unpaid. The same thing happened also in Pittsburgh. What a bond that noble act created between Labor and Capital !

In our imaginary struggle arbitration brought to both parties peace and prosperity. But there are incidental results, not so obvious and immediate, but more deep, cheering, and lasting.

In such a reconciliation as I have described, without sacrifice of self-respect and independence, the workingman has taught himself self-control and acquired experience ; he has added to his intelligence and his influence. These are the advantages he gains from organization. To obtain from it all possible, this organization should be localized. It should have a place as a convenient centre. Where they can, let workingmen secure their own hall. In the very purchase they cultivate foresight and fraternity. Meetings follow ; officers are selected ; measures are discussed ; methods are adopted. What an education for the workingman ! His hall becomes his college. In such places and by such exercises some of the best men in our country are trained. How much more desirable such plans than the noise and blood of strikes ! Here wild passion is loosed, and when the violence ends, instead of being morally and intellectually better, men have sunk themselves toward the level of the tiger and bull-dog.

IN ORGANIZATION AND ARBITRATION LABOR MUST FIND ITS
RECONCILIATION WITH CAPITAL.

But beyond these remedies is also a third, which, although of less importance, is not to be overlooked. I allude to CO-OPERATION.

Some of us remember the time when near many large manufacturing in this country was a store owned by the employers. Operatives were paid largely in orders. This was a violation of nature herself. Always the true recompense for labor is *money*. Nothing else satisfies. See the wife of the operative in the store with her order. She feels and acts as if she was at the mercy of the employer, who puts what price he pleases on his goods. The temptation to exorbitance is enormous. And the hesitating woman presents her order as if she asked a favor instead of demanded a right. Yes! the hard results of her husband's toil, taxed by merciless profits, are given her with a smirk of condescension by the clerk, who appears to be distributing a charity. In no way has capital ever more fleeced, oppressed, and degraded labor. Such a store was a wrong and an insult to American workmen.

To remedy the evil described, Labor, in England, determined to have its own stores, and keep the profits of sales for its own benefit. It was thus arose the CO-OPERATIVE SYSTEM, which has grown to immense proportions. The stores in England have been admirably managed and are largely successful. There have been failures, but the scheme as a whole has been a vast gain to workmen. In some cases Labor has accumulated money and passed into the ranks of Capital.

The English co-operative system has not always flourished in America; our ways here are not sufficiently cautious and methodical; but the system is founded in the nature of things. It has a great future, and should be carefully studied by American workmen. Wherever possible, next the manufactory of Capital should be the store of Labor.



JAY GOULD,

Called the Napoleon of American Finance. His fortune controls six thousand and forty-six miles of railroad, over one hundred and fifty thousand miles telegraph lines, and two Atlantic Cables, these securities amounting to, par value, \$439,000,000.

Co-operation, like Organization and Arbitration, will add to the intelligence of the operative, to his enterprise, his manliness, his wealth, his independence, and his influence. No money could be invested better by the Knights of Labor than a sum sufficient to send an able representative of their number to study in England the minutest details of a system which has had for years a wise, faithful, and earnest advocate in the Hon. Thomas Hughes. The writer has the honor of a personal acquaintance with that gentleman, and would be glad to furnish a letter of introduction. He would meet with open hand the representatives of American Labor and facilitate their efforts in acquiring practical information, which would be transmitted to future generations, and thus survive in lasting benefits to our country.

On this part of our subject one suggestion remains.

It has been sometimes urged that every workman should be paid a portion of the profits of his employers, and thus have a direct personal interest in the business. Nothing could be more attractive in theory. Possibly in practice it may be successful. Indeed, there are cases where the plan has produced excellent results. Still, it does not appear that it will ever be widely extended. Where the numbers employed are large, the profits to each is so small as to be a slight stimulant to increased skill and industry. Especially would the inducement appear contemptible in this land of enterprise and expectation. The American genius is too generous and aspiring to be attracted by the few annual dollars which would be each man's paltry share.

Moreover, the plan tends to discord. Workingmen, where it is introduced, are tempted to watch their employers, criticise their course, and interfere with their business. Such intrusions are not only intolerable but injurious, and are always resented. What was intended for encouragement and harmony becomes then a source of dissatisfaction and alienation.

There is a better way to reach the result. Let Labor turn to profit the co-operative system until it becomes Capitalist! We have just seen that profit in small sums would be scorned. Let now a community of workingmen unite their savings and earnings! We will suppose that the Knights of Labor have realized a considerable sum. Thousands are respected where tens are despised. Money is always wanted. The wealthiest manufacturer encounters times when he needs more in his business. Under such circumstances he would be glad to borrow from his workmen. When the Knights of Labor have accumulated a sufficient sum, they will soon be sought by the Kings of Capital, and even small profits distributed by the employed themselves for their own benefit would be gratefully received, where, doled out by the employer, they would be unwelcome and despised.

LARGE FORTUNES.

We now approach a subject more difficult, more delicate, and more dangerous than the conflicts of Labor and Capital already discussed.

In all ages and countries there has been a tendency to immense accumulations of wealth in a few persons.

During the early days of the Roman Republic fortunes were small and manners simple. But even then Cato lamented the increase of wealth and the introduction of Grecian luxury. The Empire created a plethora of riches. Spoils of nations poured into the Eternal City. Wealth in certain families became colossal. Luxury succeeded and then corruption. The vices and crimes of Senators and Emperors were a disgrace to our nature, and too vile even to be mentioned. History almost exceeds belief.

Also in the mediæval ages was the same resistless impulse toward increase of wealth among the few. Kings and nobles had the land and the money. The people were poor, despised, and oppressed. Everything went to the privileged classes. Nor is the evil cured in Europe. Within a year the writer has been in the royal forest of Fontainebleau, sixty miles in circumference, set apart for the sports of kings, but yet preserved in Republican France for the amusement of her President and his associates.

In England, Italy, and Germany there are princely parks and reserves of similar extent and for similar purposes. And this for the pleasure of the few, while the many toil in poverty and despair! Thirty thousand landowners possess England! Their estates are often enormous. Yet London and Liverpool and the other manufacturing and commercial centres are crowded with wretches packed so closely together that they never have a pure breath of heaven's air, and scarcely a glimpse of heaven's sun, and live doomed to the vice, corruption, and misery coming from the contact of human beings in a pesthouse, which is a blot on man and an offense to God.

In America we might expect a more equal distribution of wealth. Our vast territory has been thrown open to the world. And yet there is room. In no country has so large a number of the people owned so large an extent of the land. Yet under our own Constitution and laws we have a few fortunes exceeding those of other nations. American money-kings are wealthier than European monarchs. Vanderbilt's fortune is probably greater than that of the Duke of Westminster. Gould may be richer than the Rothschilds. The Astor and the Stewart estates very likely surpass the inheritance of Louis Philippe to his family.

What is the consequence to the American rich? It is not hard to answer.

In his house in Park Lane, London, Mr. Hughes once told me that the most difficult social and political problem in England was to save the children of the aristocracy from the luxury and corruption incident to idleness. Human nature is the same in republican America and monarchic Europe. Anywhere on earth vast fortunes in families tend to extravagance and dissoluteness. God's law requires every man to earn his bread. *Industry only secures virtue.* When we violate Heaven's rule we must suffer



THOMAS HUGHES.

[Great apostle of co-operative system of labor.]

Heaven's penalty. Our rich American families, if they perpetuate their vast estates, will become centres of moral contamination.

And the example of plethoric prosperity excites discontent in the poor. When a suffering wretch comes from the filth and confinement of his miserable tenement-house, he naturally feels envious and resentful as he passes the lordly mansion of the republican aristocrat, pampered in pride and luxury.

Nor is this all. Monopolists of wealth control the trade and influence the politics of the country. They buy votes, shape legislation, bribe the bench, and also make corners in the gold market, corners in the stock market, corners in the grain market, corners in the oil market, corners in the cotton market, and the cattle market. Combined, they can control all the values of the country, and largely influence the politics of the country. By their selfish speculations our American money-kings can make the cabin-loaf more costly, the cabin-lamp dearer, the cabin-fire more expensive, the cabin-garment more difficult to obtain, and the cabin-dollar less valuable when acquired. Every necessary of Labor is subject to the greed of Capital. Railway and telegraph, the artery and the vein of our commercial life, are as much under the control of monopoly, as pulsations in the prices of grain, oil, and coal. Our country seems passing under the sway of a few of these kings of mammon.

NIHILISM, COMMUNISM, SOCIALISM.

It is not strange men seek remedies for these gigantic evils.

First we have Nihilism.

This was born in Russia, and it had a singular origin. The peasant farmers in the land of the Czars were virtual slaves. Yet it is a strange fact that they had also many of the attributes of freemen. Always under their serfdom they were permitted to form themselves into bodies called Communes, in which they discussed all questions in relation to their land. They, and not the nobles, decided when to plow, when to sow, when to reap, and when to sell. The emancipation of Alexander transferred from the nobles to this Commune the absolute title to one-half of the land in Russia. Many estates, burdened by mortgages, were made worthless. Impoverished nobles became desperate. Fleeing from the country to cities, they were centres of revolution. These are the men who gave birth to Nihilism. First they tried to arouse the emancipated serfs, who constitute fifty millions of the population of Russia. But these recent freemen had in their hearts no true spark of liberty. They are satisfied if they can eat and drink and work and die like their fathers. Without the peasant masses Russian liberators were powerless. Ages will be necessary to awake the emancipated serfs to the intelligence and energy essential to those who assert their inalienable natural rights. Russian

patriots could not wait. How then shall they supply the want of armies? What shall the despairing noble do? He will undermine the palace of the Czar, he will make his Imperial Majesty a mark for bullets, pursue him with dynamite, and encompass him with every form of peril, and extort from tyranny by assassination what an army would extort by battle.

Nihilism tried this experiment. For a time it seemed successful. But the Czar defended himself. He called to his aid all the resources of his empire. Spy and soldier were mercilessly employed. Conspirators were discovered, tried, convicted, transported, hung. Mines and prisons were filled with the victims of despair. The Nihilist grew weary of his own work of blood. Indeed, no organization can long subsist on a mere policy of destruction. Also against assassination is the Law of the Almighty Creator of the Universe. On His statute-book is written:—"Thou shalt not kill."

Besides, assassination is not only a crime, but a cowardice. To lie in ambush and strike your victim degrades you into a wild beast. The stealthy tiger thus kills his prey. Manhood loves open battle. Never can the inspiration of liberty be kindled by murder. Nihilism means *nothingism*. It indicates a soul which has lost faith in itself, in humanity, in God, in everything. Nihilism is despair—the last wail of the lost. Negative in creed and positive in crime, Nihilism is insufficient to maintain the struggles for liberty. *Hope alone makes man invincible.*

Russia can never hurl away the tyranny of her Czars until her people are prepared. You cannot elevate her peasants by dynamite; they need the schoolmaster. Educate them, and Russia will be free. You can no more enslave intelligence than you can bridle the air or quench the sun.

And what has dynamite done for Ireland? Suppose the Tower in ruins; the Parliament House a wreck; Westminster Abbey

and Windsor Castle exploded to fragments! London in ashes will not help Ireland; arson and assassination never made a people worthy of independence: rather they bring discredit on a good cause, alienate wise men, and delay the day of triumph. Mr. Parnell's leadership has accomplished more for his country than can be achieved by centuries of murderous and destructive violence.

Yet in Russia and in Ireland we feel a certain sympathy with men driven by wrong to despair. Nihilism is human nature without hope; it is a political lunacy. Homicide among shipwrecked wretches, where one life is sacrificed to save many, will touch the heart. Groaning beneath centuries of wrong, with no light, no hope, no relief, we palliate the crimes of men whose passions rule and whose reason reels.

In America, Nihilism has no excuse. Our Revolution has given us all the rights for which Europe has yet to battle. Our workmen have no need of those reckless measures with which Nihilism would terrify tyranny. Labor in this country has decided that in her war against Capital she will never employ methods which have brought no good to Russia and great harm to Ireland.

Nor has COMMUNISM many advocates in our Republic. It is a product of France, and is nearly equivalent to Nihilism in Russia. Without a definite policy, it seems a mere spirit of universal destruction. Communism is enmity to the successful classes; Communism is war against prosperity; Communism would tear down everything and build up nothing. Such a policy of ruin cannot long survive in any nation. The French Revolution transmitted it from the last century to the vicious and criminal classes of Paris, who are not likely to be teachers and examples for American workingmen. Apostles of Communism have been in our midst to plead their cause. Labor here has already pronounced its



CHARLES STEWART PARNELL,
The champion of Home Rule for Ireland and head of the Land Leagues in Europe and
America.

verdict, and is too intelligent and too conservative to be misled into the advocacy of plans which are confessedly destructive to all human interests, and, indeed, to the very existence of society itself.

But may there not be good in SOCIALISM?

This is of two kinds.

The first would distribute all *lands* equally among the people, and the second vest all *property* in the State for the benefit of the people.

In Europe the concentration of estates in the few is a wrong inherited from the mediæval ages. Ownership in England is more fettered than in any other country; hence the struggles there to overthrow the ancient restrictions on land. The battle for freedom of transfer and extension of ownership will not be confined to Great Britain. It will be fought all over the Continent.

As in our political rights, so in our landed estates, the Revolution made us free. The questions of Europe have slight interest for America.

Yet in our own Republic Socialism has some adherents, who advocate the wider view that all property whatever should be vested in the State for the benefit of the individual.

To our workingmen here this seems a wild dream. Labor would be no more willing than Capital to surrender its homes. His little dwelling, bought by his long toil and patient savings, is dearer to the workingman than the mansion to his employer, purchased with no sacrifice or inherited from ancestors. See the farmer, rich amid his acres! Perhaps he holds his land by patent from the government. He entered it himself, paid for it himself, plowed and sowed and reaped it himself, and built himself his fences and house and barn, and made all the improvements by his own arm and brain, surrounding himself with comforts. That farm is

his own creation ; it is baptized with the sweat of his brow, and is to him like his flesh or the very blood of his life. Assured of the rewards of his industry, you could never persuade him to convey his title to the State with the prospect of some remote, hazy, and uncertain benefit. The farmer would be as disinclined to part with his acres as Astor with the houses which yield his princely income. In this country the universal transfer of property to the State for the universal benefit is perceived by our workingmen to be an impracticable scheme, which need not be discussed. Socialism in this country is considered a vision of dreaming theorists, or a plan of waifs and idlers to derive benefit from the property of other people who have had the skill and industry to accumulate. You can never persuade our American workingmen that such folly is wisdom.

To protect the rights of the people is sufficient for government. Management of their property would be impossible. How could the State appoint men their spheres of labor? How could the State decide who shall be lawyer, physician, merchant, farmer, or mechanic? How can the State educate citizens in their trades and professions? Could the State force men down into mines, or upon ships, or to perform a thousand kinds of labor to which necessity alone can drive human beings? In distributing work to her citizens the State would encounter innumerable and insuperable difficulties, and these would multiply at every step.

Nature has left each man to choose his own calling. In this he should be free. It is his manly privilege to decide for himself. You can only stimulate his energies by the prospect of the ownership and enjoyment of the property he acquires. Only the citizen who can have a title to his land and home, and use his own for himself, will be encouraged to those activities which are the truest wealth of the State.

Socialism is the suppression of the individual. Socialism is

therefore stagnation, idleness, and unthrift. Socialism would prove the virtual extinction of each in its dream of an impracticable ideal for all. Socialism is opposed to the constitution of human nature and the everlasting ordination of the Almighty. Variety is a law of the creation. Trees differ in their fruits and flowers in their beauty and fragrance. There are orders of fishes in the sea, birds in the air, and animals on the land. Among men we see vast varieties in physical strength, moral force, and mental energy. Sweep away all the old distinctions of society and they would reappear. The very stars of heaven differ in glory. It is vain for man to be wiser than his Creator.

If, then, neither in Nihilism, nor in Communism, nor in Socialism we are to find a cure for the evils produced in our country by vast accumulations of property in the hands of the few, to the injury of the many, to what must we turn for relief? The only practical remedy is the very simplest.

IN ALL ESTATES WHOSE VALUE EXCEEDS A CERTAIN FIXED SUM, LET INCOMES BE TAXED IN A RISING SCALE, AND THE FUND THUS ACCUMULATED BE DEVOTED TO SCHOOLS, COLLEGES, UNIVERSITIES, MUSEUMS, HOSPITALS, AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PEOPLE.

Such a measure brings the question from the clouds to the earth. Any plain man can understand it. Nor does it announce any new, startling, or revolutionary principle.

You cannot restrict men as to the limits within which they are to acquire property, nor as to the degree of their expenditures. All laws with these views have failed. They seem opposed to some eternal right in man. To meddle with the title to property is unwise and dangerous for the State. Vested rights have to be respected.

But in taxation government has always been allowed liberty. It discriminates against the rich by high duties on their luxuries.

Our tariff is based on a similar principle. Having gone thus far, government can go farther along the same line. Let it strike at the exorbitant *incomes* of the rich. They are easily ascertainable and within the acknowledged power of the State. It will restrain monopoly. It will prevent the corruption of families. It will preserve the public virtue. It will benefit the few and help the many.

In proportion to the protection received by property from the State, in that proportion let property be taxed. This is simply justice. But it is expedient likewise. Does Vanderbilt have an income of ten millions from his railway stocks and government securities? Let him pay a tax of a tenth to the State, and all men of inferior wealth, down to a certain fixed limit, in similar proportion. This plan will arrest the tendency to colossal fortunes, and convert a private injury into a public benefit. The path to the remedy is short and plain. We repeat it: *Let the law impose enormous taxes on excessive incomes.* Nor should the money thus obtained be used to encourage idleness and foster pauperism. The State should expend it for the people in schools, in colleges, in universities, in museums, in hospitals, and other similar public institutions.



WILLIAM H. VANDERBILT,

Late President of the New York Central Railroad, and at the time of his death having a controlling interest in ten thousand four hundred miles of railroad, or about one-twelfth of the entire mileage of the United States, with a capitalization, par value, of about \$687,000,000.

EDUCATION AND LABOR.

Permit me to conclude this most interesting and important subject with some practical advice to American workingmen.

First, EDUCATE your children.

Here is your interest. What gives Labor in this nineteenth century privileges superior to those of Labor in any previous century? Superior intelligence. Labor *now* can read, can write, can think, can discuss, can plan, can organize. Labor *then* was so far sunk into the stupidity of ignorance that it was used by Capital as a man treats his donkey—it was belabored without stint, and the creature submitted because it knew no better. Our nineteenth century has converted the beast into a man. Labor has no longer donkey-ears for Capital to pull, nor donkey-hide for Capital to beat, nor donkey-spirit for Capital to oppress. Intelligence has made Labor a human giant. Labor has acquired the intelligence to perceive, the intelligence to resist, the intelligence to conquer. Labor has elevated itself to the level of Capital by intelligence. His own intelligence the American workingman should increase in his children. He may make the precious gift in this way immortal.

Having been for many years a college professor and president, I may venture to enlarge on this branch of my subject.

Every child in the land should be taught reading, writing, and

arithmetic. Without a knowledge of these no man is qualified to vote or exercise his other rights as a citizen. Ignorance is the path to the rum-shop, the prison, and the gallows. Hence, in whatever is essential to the citizen, the State should *compel* parents to educate their children. Such a course is demanded by mere political expediency as a measure of self-preservation, without any lofty moral and religious motive.

Beyond this elementary training we rise into another sphere.

Some imagine collegiate education a boon to be conferred on all. The experience of the writer leads to an opposite conclusion. According to his observation the college may prove a curse as well as a blessing. It presumes aptitudes parents can no more create than they can fashion a flower or a star. Half our youth in colleges are there without reason. I have seen a farmer's son in college who wished to escape hard work on his father's farm; I have seen a mechanic's son at college because he wished to escape hard work in his father's shop; I have seen the sons of the wealthy at college, because there seemed nothing for them to do in their fathers' home. Often the rich send their sons to college that they may obtain a thin varnish of respectability. In all such cases the college is a curse. Youth are unfitted for a calling they might adorn, and not fitted for a calling nature never intended them to pursue. The invariable result is idleness, dissipation, and failure.

Now, if from the excessive incomes of the rich the State had a fund to establish institutions of learning, she could appoint examinations, by which only those possessing the requisite gifts could be permitted to enter her colleges and universities. To the qualified the door should always be open. Here the State should know neither rich nor poor. Aptitudes for the higher education *are not in rank, but in birth*. They are created by the Almighty. We may *discover* them, but never make them. Hence the college



CORNELIUS VANDERBILT,

Eldest son of William H. Vanderbilt, and probable successor to his father as one of the railroad kings of this country.

and the university should be free to all classes who possess the proper gifts, whether they be the sons of Labor or the sons of Capital. Here again Capital and Labor should meet on the same level. If the poor have not the money, let the State supply it from the fund derived from the incomes of the rich. When the children of Capital and Labor meet thus together in great public educational institutions on the basis only of *merit*, we will have done all possible to develop the human soul and all possible to eradicate class distinctions. We believe in the future that this will be the plan to harmonize the warring social elements which disturb our Republic.

Next, let the American workingmen **IMPROVE** themselves each in his special calling.

You respect your brother the bee for his excellent cell, and esteem him your superior in skill. The little ant commands your admiration by his work. Even the spider excites your regard, because he is a good mechanic. You have a high opinion of the beaver on account of his ingenuity, perseverance, and success. For the black boy who polishes your boot into a mirror you feel a certain esteem. The humblest laborer, who is competent and faithful, is appreciated by his fellow-citizens. On the contrary, the lawyer, the physician, and the statesman, in the loftiest positions, ignorant or neglectful of duty, sink in your regard. We never respect shams; jackdaws are soon stripped of peacock feathers. Men treat with slight ceremony sons of money-kings, who live in palatial mansions and indulge themselves in the most costly style and luxury, and yet have no ability to earn a loaf of bread or a pair of shoes. Successful skill in some vocation is always a condition of our respect and confidence.

Every workman, however humble his department, should seek in it the highest excellence attainable. If he has only to ent a screw, polish a pin, or drive a rivet, let him do it well. His

merit will be recognized. The mechanic who has no interest in his work, who performs it only when under a superintendent's eye, who exerts himself just enough to get his pay, and who has no ambition for increased skill, can never rise to influence. He cannot respect himself; how can he expect others to respect him? The basis of each workman's influence is each workman's good work, and the total result of the influence of all workmen is the total result of the good work of all. It is the sum of its practical and successful skill that is to give labor its true power and final triumph. Shams and shirks are never to control the great movements of our world.

In some respects the old system of apprenticeship had an advantage. The man who spent seven years in learning a trade had pride in his knowledge. Skill acquired by time possessed value. Where the shop was small, it was also more apt to be noticed. Now, in the crowded mass and perpetual din of a modern manufactory the individual workman feels overlooked; hence he has not the old incentive to personal skill. But, however unnoticed by others, every man is observed by himself. His best capital is his self-respect, and his self-respect is based on his skill and his fidelity; and the sum of individual knowledge and character is the power of labor in human society.



THE LATE COLONEL EDMUND RICHARDSON, COTTON KING OF THE
WORLD.

At the close of the Civil War he was a bankrupt, but before his death, at his home, Jackson, Miss., he had built up a fortune of from eight to twelve millions, and he was the owner and manager of forty cotton plantations in Louisiana, Arkansas, and Mississippi. His annual income exceeded \$1,000,000.

HOW WORKINGMEN MAY BECOME CAPITALISTS.

Again, workingmen should acquire property. This, next to skill, integrity, and industry, is the greatest source of influence. Often it represents their combined result. Property is a good practical unit by which to measure the value of a man in this very practical world.

Go into that enormous factory! As the bands roll, the wheels turn, and all the vast machinery begins its daily work, amid the noise and dust and crowd, see that quiet man at the beginning of his day's task. Evening finds it well performed. And he goes to his own bright, cheerful dwelling, with its yard in front and its garden behind, and a hundred small contrivances for comfort, appreciated by his family. Paid for out of his wages, that house is the visible symbol of the man. It is an undeniable proof of his success. You know that *he* is no waif in society. He owns too much to risk in strikes and dynamite; indeed, in his measure, he is a recognized power in the world. Property has added a hundredfold to his influence. What it does for a man it does for a class. Every dollar in money and every foot of land owned by Labor, by just so much, adds to the total of its force in its struggle with Capital.

But to attain success American workingmen must also ORGANIZE.

Intelligence, integrity, and property increase the power of the individual. ORGANIZATION employs individual power for the general good.

Who more helpless in a shop than the solitary workman? Alone, his particular product is useless. To complete the locomotive and send it forth for its swift flight over the world, you must bring together the work of numbers. Omit the labor of the man who cuts one small screw, and your majestic machine may be a failure. It has no more power to move than the ground on which it stands so grandly. Organization alone can complete a locomotive and make it a thing of speed and value.

In battle a single soldier accomplishes nothing. Nay! without drill a million is almost as useless. Each man must be specially trained for his particular duty before the whole can fight effectually. Discipline rendered invincible the Macedonian phalanx, the Roman cohort, and the Napoleonic guard. The military machine must be made to act under a single head. A bee-hive and an ant-army furnish as good examples of this part of our subject as the best soldiers under the ablest generals who have conquered empires. And ORGANIZATION alone can make effectual the plans and hopes of American workingmen.

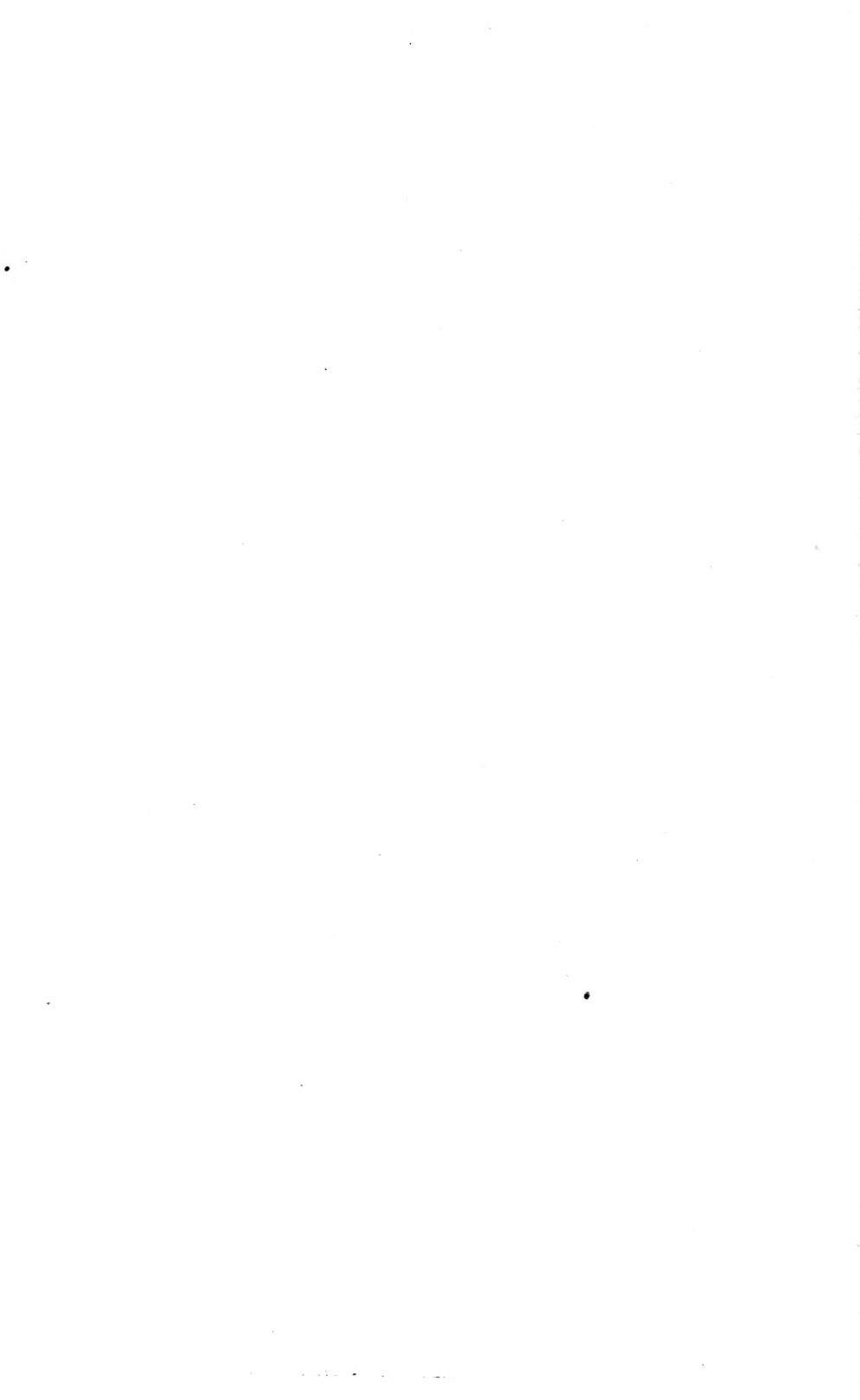
Just here their schemes have mostly failed. They lack concert. All the parts of the machine do not work together. The soldiers in the army of Labor have never been united in their strife with Capital.

Organization requires a centre. This should be something visible and tangible. A HALL for meetings imparts fixity, solidity, and dignity to an enterprise. Before all men it is a proof of successful achievement. The hearts of men, too, become attached to a place which assists their work. It lives in memory, imagination, and affection, and has the combined advantage of sentiment and convenience.



ROBERT GARRETT.

On the death of his father, John W. Garrett, he succeeded as President of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, coming into a fortune of \$12,000,000, and controlling two thousand miles of railroad, which is represented by a capitalization of about \$85,000,000.



In every town, city, or district, let Labor own its Hall! It will be a centre of unity, a token of prosperity, and a place of power. Add a library, a reading-room, a lecture-room, and all conveniences suggested by experience. By such ownership Labor again takes rank with Capital.

Nor should the press be overlooked. Workingmen should have their own papers and magazines, not published for the purposes of abuse and disorder, but to promote information, to stimulate enterprise, to increase harmony, to perfect organization, and, so far as possible, to make the knowledge of each subserve the good of all. Labor organized is Labor victorious.

And what will be the triumph after struggles begun in right, guided by reason, and aiming at justice? On terms that make all interests secure, a lasting reconciliation between Labor and Capital.



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